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MILITARY Miniatures

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It has arrived!

Tamiya weighs in with its masterpiece in multi-media



On Blitzen!

Aftermarket everything for the old Italeri standard

On Track's "Sturer Emil"

The DES MCG4 halftrack

Italeri's RSO gets the works

The DML Panther G and Heavy rail car

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Women!**
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No. **18**

Miniatures MILITARY™

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C O N T E N T S

In Review

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ON THE COVER:

What's got over 600 parts, including metal, brass and plastic? It's one big hunk of flamin' styrene all right. Tamiya gets super busy with its 30th anniversary kit of the Dragon Wagon. Our ultra lavish 9-page review begins on page 36.

From Your Editor



What do you like to build? I have always been fascinated by the great diversity of subject matter in our little hobby. It seems like everyone has his (or the rare hers) own little area of interest and expertise.

This is probably a sound philosophy. There is so much out there to know about a specific subject. It's probably safer to just pick a subject and concentrate on it.

As a youngster I built whatever I thought was cool at the time, but I really had a hard time finishing anything. I would have the greatest enthusiasm for a project generally for about as long as it took to get glue on it. When I re-entered the hobby as an adult, I was determined to enjoy every inch of the process. I was

proud of my ability to work through the various problems and finish each model. Not everything was a masterpiece, but the experience gained from model to model was always helpful.

I got back into the hobby in 1986 after passing a hobby shop several times without going in. I finally decided to stop one day and the result was the purchase of an M5 Stuart. On subsequent trips I noticed that a fairly large collection of mostly German Tamiya armor was in the shop on consignment from some misguided individual. I thought that (maybe) I would pick up one or two of the kits and see what happened.

Within a week I bought every kit.

The German stuff appealed to me for a couple of reasons. Firstly, much of it was more colorful, with its "three tone" schemes and large tactical and divisional markings when compared to allied tanks. Secondly, there was something about the German tanks that just looked cool. I think this may stem from the fact that the Germans designed their tanks completely without influence from industry (this would ultimately be their downfall). Basically, here's a tank design, let's do it. On the other hand, American tank designs were heavily influenced by the locomotive and automotive industry. There was more of an emphasis on where and who was going to manufacture it.

Not too long after my initial German phase I got the Russian bug and for a good two years I built nothing but the Tamiya T-34 series of kits. Then it was back to German and on to (of all things) modern Russian stuff.

Eventually, I became one of those weird guys that likes everything. I think that this is rare. I seem to suffer (suffer?) from a kind of "armor empathy." Over the years, whenever I got together with other armor modelers I seemed to get drawn in to whatever it is that they dig.

A big part of this was traveling up and down the east coast to various regionals and shows, meeting other modelers and seeing their work. I also did a lot of local traveling, visiting the different chapters of local modeling clubs.

Looking back over the years, a few interesting individuals stand out. Let me give you a brief run down (the names have been omitted to protect the innocent).

There is that large share of individuals to which the armor world is simply nothing but German. One bloke I know would go up and down the Panzer line. Panzer I, II, III, etc., building the same kit over and over and trying to improve them each time. There are also those who simply will not venture outside their little miniature Reich. Even to this day, with so many great kits out there, they are still dedicated to that single subject.

There are also a fair share of Allied freaks, too. They also are hard pressed to venture beyond the white star. This crowd can have some fascinating specialties, as well. For example, only vehicles from around D-Day; only Commonwealth vehicles, or exclusively U.S. or British soft skins.

Modern stuff is certainly its own niche. One of the biggest advantages of this subject is that reference material is sometimes only a car trip away. Many modern armor enthusiasts are also active service personnel and get great reference from their own jobs.

Occasionally, the specialties get down right silly. I met a guy at the hotel bar of a regional that built nothing but the old Nitro model of the LVT. He must have done twenty of the things and he had converted and repaired the model in dozens of large and small ways.

One individual quite close to the magazine found himself immersed in the Sherman (maybe it just happened one morning over coffee). I think he was seduced by the immense and minute diversity of the line. His case is a bit out of the ordinary, as it resulted in years of detailed research and well over twenty five (or more) finished models. Word has it he'll never build another one...

So exactly what is my point? Just this: there's a huge fascinating hobby out there just waiting to be gobbled up. Broadening your subject base can also broaden your enjoyment of the hobby. If you are a single subject guy, try this. Get together with another single subject guy and for one model, trade subjects. Then get together and go over the model. You never know, you might get hooked.

Those times, they are a changin'

Wow, a Dragon Wagon in plastic. That's really something. Welcome to a slightly expanded number eighteen. We have lowered the number of features a little to bring you expanded coverage on the DW. Also Joe Porter's reoccurring "Dream Machine" feature gets a bit more breathing space. We hope to continue this trend as we move into '99.

Also look for two completely new features. The first is The Idea Bank. This is a list, divided by subject, of all the kits that have yet to be done. It's called idea bank because we hope that it will inspire someone out there to do one or more of the listed kits. The second new feature is Museums at Large and this will be simple, one page guides to the world's armor museums.

We are also planning some very exciting changes—some major, perhaps as soon as issue nineteen. Stay tuned!

—Pat Stansell

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Saving Private Ryan cont.

Well done in your editorial comments in issue 17 as respects the whole spectrum of "Saving Private Ryan" and the history it represents.

I think it is important to distinguish between an anti-war film and a film that shows the horrors of war.

The two are not necessarily the same. The audience can draw its own conclusions. Certainly we have enough "political statements" as it is with the endless drone of the media telling all what to think and how to think without adding anything more. If Mr. Spielberg made a film in tribute to the sacrifices of the men who served the country in World War II, he clearly accomplished his objective as far as I am concerned. At the same time, if he showed how great those sacrifices were in the context of the horrors of war, so much the better for a new generation of Americans who, hopefully, will never have to experience such horror on such a scale. Nevertheless, the horror is just as great for those who served and died in Chosin, the Ia Drang, Kuwait or Somalia. Such is the nature of war and no one opposes war more than those who have to wage it.

Mr. Spielberg's effort is "certified" by history. Those of us who study it realize that what took place on Omaha and Utah Beaches (as well as Sword, Gold and Juno) can never be underestimated or fully understood. Professor Ambrose has tried to take the professional historian's role to convince us with more than a three hour movie experience. I applaud your efforts to urge your readers to "be reminded of the real source of it all..." for their hobby and for the history we all pray will never have to be repeated.

It is too easy to forget about the row upon row of simple headstones marking the graves of Americans who paid the ultimate sacrifice when often the occasion has come to mean a day of special savings at the local mall. Keep up the good work. Thank you.

—Lawrence C. Reid

✉

Matador—Olé!

I have been enjoying Issue #17 and the multitude of articles. While I don't expect to build everything you cover in each issue, I frequently find little tips and other gems buried in the articles.

With regard to "The Year in Preview" I would like to offer the following on the Accurate Armour AEC Matador. This vehicle was not used for towing the 17 Pounder Anti-Tank Gun but rather 4.5" and 5.5" Guns of the Royal Artillery.

In this role it was referred to as Tractor, Artillery Medium and issued on a scale of nine tractors per battery. There is some evidence that Mechanical Equipment Companies of the Royal Engineers used the same vehicle under the title Tractor 4x4 Medium. In this task it towed an 18 ton 8 wheel low-bed trailer (2 twin wheel front dolly and 2 twin wheel rear axles). These were for the movement of road construction equipment, such as R.B. Excavators and bulldozers. [British Army War Establishments IV/22C/4 and IV/22D/3 dated 20 Aug. 43 each]

As for the 17 Pounder Anti-Tank Gun, Royal

Artillery and Royal Canadian Artillery AT Regiments (battalion equivalent in size) were generally established at four batteries per regiment with a regiment assigned to each Corps and Division. Armoured division regiments were established at two batteries of M10 SP guns (initially 3", later 17 Pounder) and two batteries of towed AT guns.

Where towed 17 Pounders were assigned, the towing vehicle was a modified tank chassis (Crusader in the RA and turretless Sherman/Ram in the RCA).

Corps regiments generally had two SP batteries and two towed batteries. Initially the towed batteries were assigned a mix of 6 Pounder and 17 Pounder troops (platoon equivalent). By late war they were converting to all 17 Pounder troops.

Infantry division regiments saw the greatest mix, entering the Normandy beaches with four mixed batteries of one towed 17 Pounder troop, one SP Valentine 17 Pounder troop, and one towed 6 Pounder troop. By late war they were converting to all 17 Pounder batteries of one Valentine and two towed troops.

As for the movement of the towed guns, it was quite a shopping list. The 6 Pounders were dragged by Lloyd and T16 Carriers with some units making do with Universal Carriers. The 17 Pounders were towed by the good old Field Artillery Tractors (Quads). [For RCA modelers, use the Tamiya Ford Quad for Italian theater and the Italeri Chevrolet Gun Tractor for NWE]. Late war, efforts were made to re-equip the towed troops with M5/M9 Halftracks.

A note of caution, as with most things operational, there were probably variations to the above notes.

—Bob R.B. Ascah
rbascah@sprint.ca

✉

Rub down turn around...

Following your enthusiastic invention of Post-it stencils in editorial Number 15, I thought the following notes might be of interest.

Some of our hobby's more well-known celebrities may be able to produce convincing markings by hand, but as a mere mortal, I have been relying on commercial decals for that finishing touch.

After ruining too many models with poorly applied waterslide decals, I tried rub-downs. The final appearance benefits from the lack of carrier film, but as rub-downs cannot be slid like conventional decals, positioning has to be right the first time.

Realizing that things would not improve unless I could devise a better technique, I borrowed from the real thing and pondered the feasibility of rub-down stencils.

Consider these advantages.

1. Just like the real thing, a super thin coating of any color could be applied by airbrush.
2. Perfect color matching would at last be possible.
3. Colors could be merged and faded to reproduce that worn and weathered look.
4. The cut-outs in the stencils would be positively located, as in the real thing, making it impossible for tiny details to become misplaced.
5. Perfect alignment would be ensured by the outside shape of the stencil locating with a detail or edge on the model.
6. For perfect multi-color registration, each successive color stencil would be registered with the shape of its predecessor.
7. Production cost would be the same as a single color rub-down.

Application would be simplicity itself. First cut out the selected stencil from the sheet and align it with the locating edge on your model. Rub down the stencil in the normal way. Next, mask off any surrounding area you wish to protect, with Maskol or air brush masking "Frisk" film. Then lightly apply the chosen color with your airbrush.

After drying, peel off the Maskol or Frisk film and remove the rub-down stencil by gently dabbing it with the sticky side of a small piece of low tack tape. Behold, a genuine miniature stencil!

To fully exploit the benefits of this technique I am preparing master artwork for a set of U.S. vehicle markings. Inspired by Emile Becker's book *Marques et Organisation* I generated directly from U.S. Army references, the artwork for both lettering and symbols will be guaranteed 100% accurate. The outside shape of each stencil will, of course, be designed to simplify alignment. I am considering the inclusion of notes on color references, but local variations and fading will make these less accurate.

At last, I am on the verge of having the tools to apply museum quality markings to my models.

I would welcome any reactions by e-mail to the following address. Tony.Gibbs@btinternet.com

Thanks for a great magazine

—Tony Gibbs

Gibbs Design Partnership

We can't wait!

✉

Poochie problems

Another great, way useful issue! Do have a nit to pick though...

In Short Takes, issue 16 "The Year in Preview," you stated regarding the released-at-any-moment Tamiya M-8 Greyhound armored car: "This kit has never been done before by Tamiya." (insert wrong-answer buzzer)

According to 2 hoary old Tamiya catalogs I have (1973 and '74), Tamiya did in fact once have a kit of the Greyhound. Its catalog number was MT-116. I only have the 2 catalogs, so I can't say when it was introduced or when it was dropped from the line. The '74 catalog shows it in Japanese Defense Force livery, B&W photo but likely a tan color w/the Japanese flag on the turret side. Interestingly, even though it's definitely listed both years as a Tamiya kit, the figure shown in the turret both times is a Monogram U.S. infantry officer...

That fills my need to be a pedantic pest for today. Thanks. Keep up the good work & keep up the irreverence—the way some 'zines in the field write, you'd think this was High Mass, not something that's supposed to be FUN.

—Michael von Glahn

You know where you can insert that wrong answer buzzer... Well, O.K. However, when we say "done" we are usually referring to the Military Miniatures line which began in 1969 with our friend, the Tiger I. There is a wide variety of old Tamiya kits out there and we hardly ever consider them when reporting the current "state of our art." For instance we'd never mention Tamiya's very first Panther kit which was released in the mid-fifties, complete with cat artwork and six roadwheels. Get it?

✉

Jeep freaks aren't creeps

Liked your article on the new Tamiya Jeep in issue 15. The .50 cal was mounted on the Jeep, but it used a different, stronger and braced pedestal than

the MG. Many pictures of a .50 cal can be seen in the book "Jeep" by Colt Denfield. I was disappointed to see that Tamiya did not include the trailer with this kit, even though they were very common during WW2.

I also see in an ad that Skybow has released a M4A1. Well it's about time! Now all us "jeep freaks" need is a re-tooled Tamiya M151 and an M42 Mustang Mine.

—idgunfghtr@aol.com

By the way—check out the "Idea Bank" in the following pages.



I see, ICM

I really enjoyed Chris "Panzer" Mrosko's review of ICM's T-28. I would like to bring up a minor point not mentioned in the review and that I think ICM deserves a lot of credit for.

I didn't spot this at first and it seems so darn common that I almost didn't notice it at all. All the pieces for the individual sub assemblies are on the same sprue. Now isn't that a perfectly logical way to present a model? I mean this is so simple and obvious and logical and to the best of my knowledge these two ICM kits are the only ones I have ever seen with multiple sprues that have done it this way.

Anyway I thought it was worth mentioning and I think ICM ought to be congratulated for it. I would like to see this become an industry standard. Keep up the good work and keep on trackin'.

—Eric E. Emerson
EricEE@aol.com

Post war blues

Hey guys, how about some more articles on post WW2 stuff? I know that WW2 remains popular and is usually the subject of new releases, but I cannot see how you can devote articles on the old German stuff, when there are still the few modern era vehicle kits to be covered. I would like to see a review comparing the DML T-80 with the SKIF T-80.

Those WW2 German kit builders have it really good already, with practically every new release being German stuff.

I have been buying everyone of your issues since number 10 and I am glad to see that you have included a few Russian subjects in those pages.

—Tony Leung
tuel@intergate.bc.ca

Well, as we've said before, it's really the manufacturers that dictate the general subject matter of any issue, simply by choosing the subjects that they release. This past year, we have branched out into somewhat more diverse detailing articles. As 1999 progresses, we hope to continue this trend and revisit a whole range of subjects, especially modern ones, with detailing and scratch building articles. And just maybe a few brand new items...



Dragon Wagon abuse

First of all, thank you very much for the continuing excellence of MMR. Delivery is much more reliable here in the UK since Ilistorex Agents have taken over the task.

In the article on the M26 rig you mention the example modified by the British. As far as I know, it

was the only British operated example and it's official name was "Pacific TRI modified." It had a ballast body and 21.00 x 24 tyres (sorry tires!). The winch seems to have been retained.

The vehicle was constructed before the end of the war and was part of the development of the Leyland FV1000 series. The Leyland vehicle was very big, a sort of Big Foot on steroids, though mercifully not proceeded with, beyond a few prototypes. It was after all 4.09 meters wide (that's over 17 feet in real money) and unsuitable for most British and European roads even today.

The book to look for is "Tugs of War" (Warehouse Publications ISBN 0-952563-1-6).

There are a number of preserved M26 tractors in the UK, some imported from France and Belgium, where they were used as heavy recovery tractors and some that were purchased post-war by haulage contractors. Sadly the latter tend to have nice 'modern' (read that as sixties) enclosed civilian cabs.

—John Harris
john@ukmilmod.force9.co.uk



Got a problem with any of this?

Send those comments to: Mail Sack, Military Miniatures in Review or discuss complaints, problems, wisecracks, etc. via the Internet.

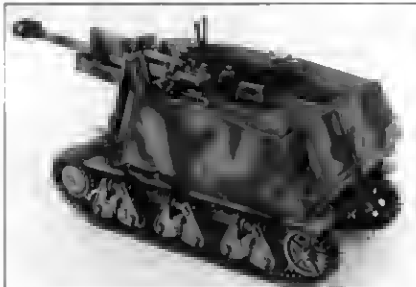
Find us at the handle: mmir35701@aol.com

Letters are sometimes edited for brevity, grammar, spelling, national security concerns and other stuff.

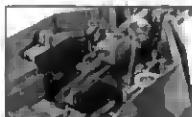
We sincerely regret that we rarely, if ever, are able to personally enter into correspondence with our readers.

On Track Model Co.

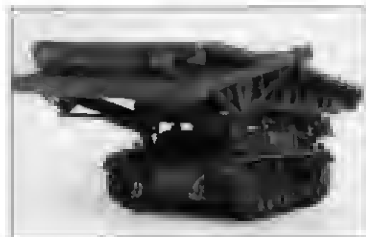
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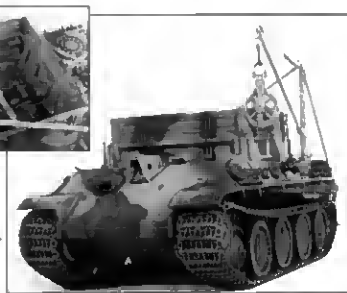
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The Year in Preview



The On Track Model Co. German Hotchkiss 39H(f) SPG.

Aber

We once asked the North American rep of Aber, rather jokingly, if Aber was run by a guy in a room somewhere that just sat and drew brass all day. The answer was a rather dead-pan "yes" (ask a stupid question...).

And so we gain a little understanding why these guys crank out so many remarkable brass sets. The stuff seems to get more and more exciting—and it sure inspires us to trot out and grab the subject kit!

Here's the latest run down of new items. 35043, **Sturmtiger, 38cm RW61 assault mortar, (part I exterior)**, to fit both the Tamiya and Italeri kits, \$24.99; 35047, **Sturmtiger interior**, for the Italeri kit, \$24.99; 35049, **RSO with PAK40**, also for the Italeri kit, available January, price TBA; 35053, **Panther Ausf. F and Panther II**, for the Dragon kit, \$24.99; 35055, **SdKfz 140/1**, for the VM kit, \$24.99; 35058, **GMC truck**, 3 large sheets for the Tamiya kit, \$32.49; 35062, **PzKpfw II Ausf. I, "Luchs,"** for the Technod kit, price \$24.99; 35069, **GMC truck**, for the Italeri kit, available January,

price TBA; 35A43, **Fenders and exhaust covers for Sturmtiger**, \$21.49; 35A60, **Fenders for Cromwell IV**, \$14.99; 35A62, **Fenders for PzKpfw II "Luchs,"** \$14.99.

We discovered something else from Aber that we thought you should know about. It's called the **1998 Professional Update and Upgrade Sets for Scale Plastic Modelers, Catalogue '98** and it is priced for retail sale at \$3.99.

This contains miniature artwork for all the Aber brass sets and it's the kind of thing that you can stare at for hours and hours until security comes and physically removes you from the air-plane... Um, well, anyway, look for copies of the '98 edition with the new 1999 edition coming soon.

Wholesale inquiries can contact Air Connection in Canada at 905-826-7460, fax 905-826-6764.

Academy

Some of the more exciting news at Chicago this past fall was some of the most low key. It turns out that Academy will release the holy trinity of U.S. WW2 armor kits this year.

By the way, Academy is now represented by Model Rectifier Corporation and we think this will result in a more organized effort to keep us informed of new armor kits.

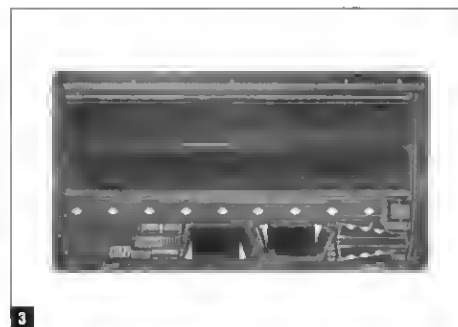
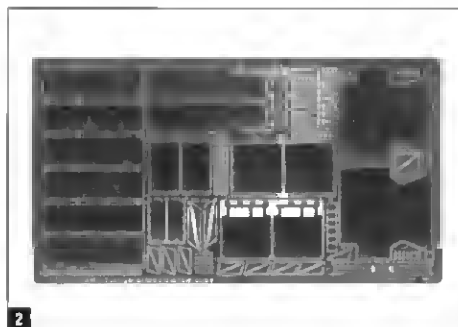
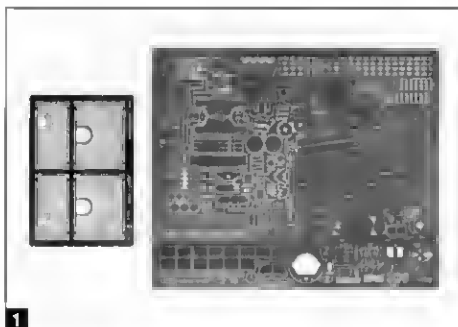
All the kit numbers and prices are to be announced. We have **M-10A1 Achilles**, the 17-pounder armed M-10 built in America and shipped to Britain; **M-10 Gun Motor Carriage**, the one and only original; **M-12 155mm Gun Motor Carriage**, a Sherman chassis with the GPF gun riding along and last, but certainly not least, the **M-36 Jackson**.

We assume they will be released in the order we have listed them. Unfortunately we have no additional information on these items as we go to press, but we will certainly bring it to you as it becomes available.

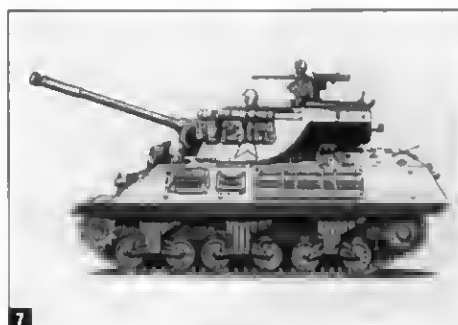
Accurate Armour

AA was displaying a few new items at Euro and a few things which had been previously announced.

Parts were on display of their new huge and ambitious **Chieftain Mk 5 Bridge layer**. This is pretty impressive, being composed of over 500 parts



1. Aber's elaborate Sturmtiger set.
2. The equally elaborate Aber Sturmtiger fender set.
3. Aber's complete set of fenders for the Tech Mod Lynx.
4. The upcoming Achilles SPG AT gun from Academy.
5. Academy's new M10 motor carriage.
6. A representation of the Academy M12 motor carriage.
7. Academy's M36.
8. The newest from CD Yoshi: German Officer, Stalingrad.
9. The new CMD July, 1945 Tiger II conversion.
10. The early StuG G model conversion from CMD.
11. Cromwell's brand new Buffalo LVT-4.
12. The new Czechmaster VW.
13. The two new SIMCA cars from DES.
14. What the new SdKfz. 9 from DES is supposed to look like.



and making up into a model over 28" long! The bridge is designed to remain workable, too. The kit will be offered as a conversion (of all things) in order to keep the price down. You'll need a copy of the older Tamiya kit. Look for item C54 and an export retail of £208.31.

Announced at Trucks & Tracks '98, the equally impressive **T-28 Super Heavy tank** was on display and is now available. This is the late war experimental big boy, designed to crack the bunkers of the Siegfried line. Two were built and one survives to adorn the front of the Patton Museum at Ft. Knox. The model is intriguing looking and it was on display in its transport mode, which has the main vehicle towing its outboard track runs. This is item K98 and its export retail is £108.50.

Their three new Ferret scout cars were also on display. These all are full kits which contain etched sheets, decals and full interiors. The detail is thick on these things and each was displayed "topless" to show off those full interiors.

The kits are **Ferret Mk 1/1 (KT118)**, **Ferret Mk 1/2 (KT119)** and **Ferret Mk 2/3 (KT120)**. Each of the kits has an export retail of \$34.00.

We are anxiously awaiting the official announcement of their previously hinted at **WW2 MIA1 Wrecker (Ward-LaFrance)**.

For more information on the entire AA line, we encourage you to check out their attractive looking web site at (where else) accurate-armor.com

AFV Club

After seeing it bandied about for the last few

years, we finally have official word on 35022, **LVT-5**, the USMC Vietnam era APC. We have no word on an exact release date, but we do know to expect a retail of \$41.95. Stay tuned..

Aires

Our buddies at Aires don't do it often, but they do it really, really well. New up is 3015, **Kübelwagen workshop conversion**, a resin and photo-etched kit retailing for \$21.99.

This contains some amazing cast resin tool drawers which contain teeny-weenie tools and other small parts. A sheet of brass also has a dozen or so wrenches and other bits. Excellent all around.

Stated to be for the Tamiya kit, but you may be able to adapt it to Italeri.

Available all over the damned place.

Anvil Miniatures

These dudes have come up with a very intriguing little idea called the **Click-Link System**. The system is composed of resin (a rather hard type) track links that simply click together and remain workable. How a bout that, huh?

Currently available in the line are: AM-35T01, **Tiger I Early Tracks** (and lower hull detail set) \$55.50; AM-35T02, **Tiger I Late Tracks** (and lower hull detail set) \$55.50; AM-35T03, **T-34 and SU Family M-1942 Waffle Track** \$35.00; AM-35T04, **T-34 M-1940m Plate Tracks** \$35.00; AM-35T05, **T-34 Split Track Type "A"** \$35.00; AM-35T06, **Panther Family Late Pattern** \$42.50; AM-35T10 **SdKfz 251D Stamped Shoe with Rubber Block**

\$25.00; AM-35D01, **Tiger I Early Lower Hull Detail Set** \$15.00; AM-35D02, **Tiger I Late Lower Hull Detail Set** \$15.00.

All prices in Australian dollars, which is currently running at around .63 U.S. This brings these sets in line with most of the other sets on the market right now at around \$35.00 (U.S. prices should be considered estimates only).

Future releases look something like this. AM-35T07, **Cromwell and Centaur Early 14" Track**; AM-35T08, **Churchill Track**; AM-35T09, **RSO Track and Winterketten**; AM-35T11, **Crusader Track**; AM-35T13, **Sd. Kfz. 251 Track (Cast Steel Link)**; AM-35T12, **Panzer I/Opel Maultier Track**; AM-35T14, **T-34 Split Track Type "B"**; AM-35T15, **Tiger II Battle Track**.

We have no release dates as of yet, nor do we have a U.S. import agent. However, you can contact Anvil Miniatures at: P.O. Box 538 Mayfield NSW 2304, Australia Phone/Fax (61) 02 4968 9455 or e-mail at anviljb@mpx.com.au

Cavalier Model Productions

Also from "Down Under" is this line of flexible zimmerit sets. They are no stranger to these pages, but we felt it was worth a second shout. The line is so far composed of: 101, **Tiger I**, \$19.99; 102, **Sturmtiger**, \$19.99; 103, **Panther G (horizontal)**, \$19.99; 104, **Panther G (tile)**, \$19.99; 105, **Panther A (horizontal)**, \$19.99; 106, **Panther A (tile)**, \$19.99; 107, **King Tiger - Henschel**, \$19.99; 108, **King Tiger - Porsche**, \$19.99; 109, **Pzkw IV Ausf. H**, \$19.99; 110, **Brummbär**, \$19.99; 111, **Pzkw IV**



Ausf J, \$19.99; **I12, Jagdtiger**, \$19.99; **I13, Panther D**, \$19.99; **I14, Jagdpantzer**, for the Dragon kit, price TBA; and **I15 StuG III G Waffle**, for the Tamiya kit, price TBA.

There is also one additional accessory item: **401, Tiger I gun barrels**, for the Tamiya kit, \$9.99.

The sheets are composed of various sections of the tanks, zimmerit coated of course, and they are ultra thin. They are applied using 5-minute epoxy and the effect is excellent.

Some of the smaller parts, such as those around tight areas, like the exhaust bases, are molded right on the sheet.

New and coming in 1999 are: **StuG IV, PzKpfw IV (L70)**, available in both standard sheet tile pattern and waffle sheet and a **Tiger I corrected turret**.

Cavalier products are available at finer hobby shops and through Precision Parts Corp.

CD Yoshi

One new figgy in this line of tasty 1/35th scale miniature dudes. **CDS615, German Officer Stalingrad**, is a kneeling cat sporting his MG40 in a thoroughly menacing fashion. And all the while kneeling. Whatta guy! The usual superb casting and attention to detail will make you want it.

CD Yoshi figures are produced by Chesapeake Model Designs.

Chesapeake Model Designs

And speaking of, we have a few items to update you on. **CMD-26, Flak 88**, now comes with turned aluminum barrels. One of Chesapeake's latest is

now available in a deluxe version. **CMD-27, Tiger II conversion kit**, can be purchased with Friulmodellismo late version single link tracks (ATL-37). This whole thing includes a replacement upper hull, driver and co-driver hatches, turret, mantlet, and a few other bits and pieces. This goes for \$75 with the Friulmodellismo tracks and \$40 without them. We have had a chance to scope this one out thoroughly. It is as you'd expect from CMD, a veritable casting wonder. It represents all the proposed July, 1945 design changes to the Tiger II. It looks like it would make a fascinating model.

CMD-28, the StuG III G (early version) also is now available. This is a complete upper hull, driver's left side vision port and 2 lifting lugs to convert the Tamiya kit to the earlier interim version of the StuG G. This was the vehicle that was featured as a conversion in issue 16. Thomas Anderson spent a good amount of time wrangling his version from the DML F8. The CMD kit will allow you to do the very same thing with a lot less work. An especially good choice for a conversion, we'd say. Look for a retail of \$15.00.

For other cool stuff you can buy from CMD see some of the other listings below.

Cromwell

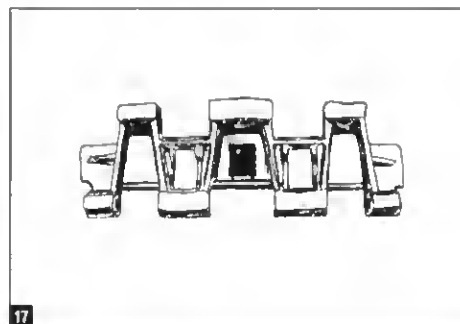
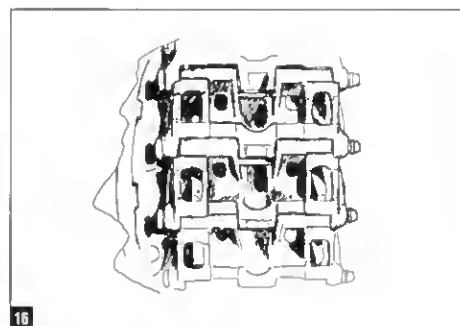
Our Scottish buddies have quite the grab bag for us this year. Most of it was on display at Euro this past fall. First up is **CK75, LVT4 "Buffalo"**. This is the open topped cargo vehicle and it's a natural follow-up to their earlier LVT. It includes interior detail for \$7250. **CK55, is the Covenanter MkIV**, which also

includes internal detail for \$65.00. **CA85**, is a nifty little set of **Early M4 bogies**. 6 are provided to help back date any appropriate Sherman kit for \$75.00. **CA92**, is a **Crusader MkII (late)**, conversion kit for the Italeri MkIII. This includes a new turret with internal detail and a detailed driver's position for \$23.50. **CA93, Final Tiger II**, is a conversion for the Tamiya Tiger II which includes a new upper turret, sprockets, tracks and engine deck for \$27.50. **CA94, the Centaur Dozer**, makes up a conversion for the Tamiya Cromwell and includes new upper hull, and complete dozer fittings for \$33.50. **CA95, Cromwell 'F' type**, is another conversion for the Tamiya Cromwell and it includes a new upper hull, turret bins, optional 95mm gun and more for \$14.50. **CA96, Charioteer TD**, is yet another conversion for the Tamiya Cromwell and it includes a new upper hull, turret with gun, track and sprockets. There are optional Christian militia/PLO parts too, and the whole thing goes for \$33.50. **CA97, is a Cromwell Tank 15.5, wide replacement tracks and sprockets** (for guess which kit?), \$11.00; **CA98, MAGACH-7**, is a conversion for the Academy Israeli M60A1 with mine plow to make up the rather hard to pronounce souped up Israeli version of the M60. It includes a new turret, nose and side armor, price TBA.

Cromwell currently has no official U.S. importer, but the kits and other items can be found through The Red Lancers or direct at Cromwell Models, Progress House - 39 Kirkpatrick Street - Glasgow G40 3RZ - Scotland - United Kingdom or via the web at <http://www.xs4all.nl/~cromwell>, e-mail: cromwell@xs4all.nl



15. The new Type 3 medium tank from Fine Moide.
16. Friul's new T-26 track (pinned).
17. The new Friul Turan/Zrinyi tracks (pinned).
18. Hobbyfan's massive M911 tractor looking for a trailer.
19. The new Jaguar M8 engine compartment.
20. Jaguar's new Berge Elefant conversion.
21. The awesome Jaguar Jagdpenthar interior.
22. "Luftwaffe Officers" from Jaguar.
23. Jaguars' surrendering Russians.
24. Those cool Poncho guys from Jaguar.
25. Eduard's T55 A (M) set (one of three sheets).
26. The new Steyr set from Eduard.
27. One of two large sheets from Eduard for the Italeri PUMA.
28. The M8 Greyhound set from Eduard (one of two sheets).



Czechmaster

For us armor-types big news sometimes comes in small packages. One of the smallest packages of big news at the last Chicago Model Show was 35013, **Volkswagen Type 87**. This is the little four-wheel drive version of the Beetle we have been hearing about for some time. A built up kit was on hand, as was a test shot of the actual kit. It looks to be a winner and it will go for a bargain basement \$12.98. Another item was simultaneously announced: 35014, **Volkswagen Type 82E**. This the standard Kübel with the Beetle body. Its price and release date remain TBA.

Squadron Mail order is the import agent, but we believe that the kit will be available everywhere.

DES Kits

DES had a few surprises for us at Euro, along with the debut of at least one previously announced item. That is 35022, the **SdKfz. 9 FAMO Artillery Tractor**. Two other versions had been previously available (the recovery version and the one with the rear mounted crane) and this rounds out the mix.

A cool conversion was on hand in the form of 35068, **SdKfz. 252**. This was the ammo supply vehicle based on the early version of the 250 half tracks. The conversion is based on the old Tamiya kit and it includes the trailer.

Another version of the **Citroën staff car** is now available. This item is the wood gas powered version and, as such, it carries the two condenser tanks on the roof. This is item number 35065.

Also in the automotive vein are two great looking little SIMCA cars. These are 35066, **SIMCA 5 Berline** and 35066, **SIMCA 5 décapotable**, which are the sedan and the Cabriolet versions respectively.

There has been a dearth of civilian cars in 1/35th scale and these items are welcome additions to any diorama set in or around WW2 France.

All U.S. prices and availability are TBA, but check with either The Red Lancers or with Squadron Mail Order. Both are known to stock the line.

Dragon

Sort of a mixed bag to kick off the year with Dragon. We have news on a couple of re releases in the form of 3514, **BRDM-3**, price TBA; 3522X, **German Bundeswehr Mars (MLRS)**, price TBA and 9002X, **German A-4 missile**. This last item will contain a newly tooled production-type stand for A4 missile and it also includes the existing prototype stand for V2 missile. Price TBA.

In totally new stuff, we have another version of the 250 (yes!): 6106, **SdKfz 250/9 NEU 2 cm Recon**. This has the complete Hangelaufette turret and will be available in February for \$27.98, 6121, **Sherman Firefly VC**, will contain all new tooling when it becomes available in February, also \$27.98.

Under the Shanghai Dragon label are, 9004, **SdKfz 138/1**, a re release of the earlier Grille kit (also once seen under the Kirin label with figures). This will be available in February. 9008 is the venerable **Panther F**, another February release. The Shanghai items are price TBA.

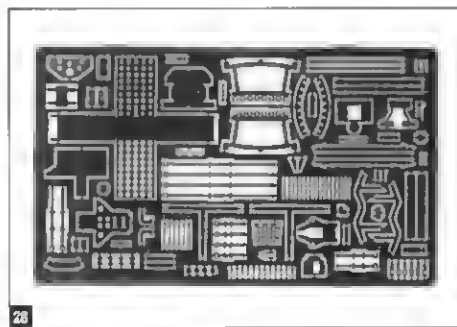
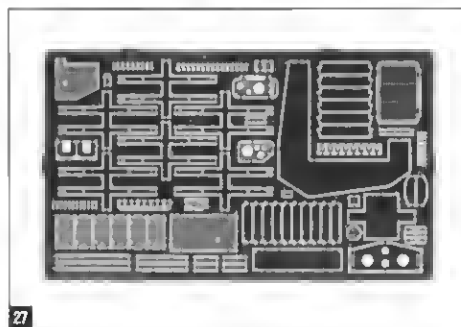
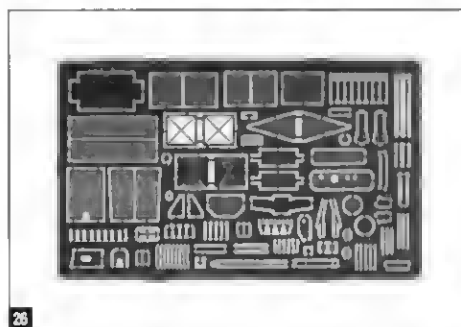
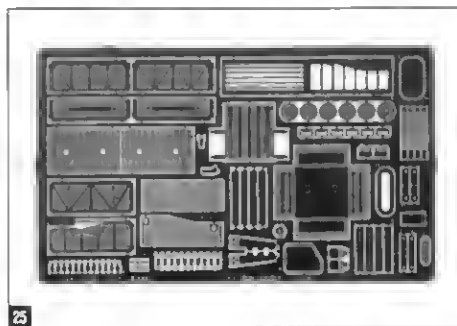
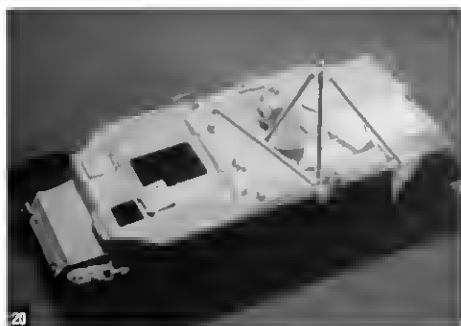
In the figgy department we have 6131, **SS**

Viking Division Armoured Recon Crew, also available February for \$7.98.

Elefant

This new company from the Czech Republic brings us some neat detailing items in the form of brass, decals, turned metal barrels and resin. We've had a chance to check out a few samples and we've listed them here for you. There is a lot more, so contact their exclusive U.S. rep, VLS for more information or check your latest VLS catalog. Here are a few of the highlights.

35006B, **PzKpfw III Ausf. J (late)**, detail set for Dragon/Gunze kit, brass and resin, price TBA; 35008B, **PzKpfw III Ausf. M**, detail set for the Dragon kit, brass and resin, price TBA; 35016A, **PzKpfw III N from L**, detail set for Dragon kit, brass and resin, price TBA; 35019C, **Mudguards with detail**, brass for the DML PzBfWgIIIK, \$8.95; 35029B, **StuG III Ausf. F/8 (late model)**, brass and resin detail set for the Dragon kit, price TBA; 35031B, **Kingtiger "Porsche"**, detail set for the Tamiya kit, brass, resin and decals, price TBA; 35032C, **Mudguards with detail**, for the DML StuG III F/8, \$8.95; 35050B, **Jagdtiger "Henschel"**, detail set for the DML kit, brass and resin, price TBA; 35338, **40mm gun for T-70**, turned aluminum for the Toga kit, \$5.95; 35350, **20mm Flak 38 for the Tamiya kit**, metal barrel, price TBA; 35353, **20mm KwK 38 for SdKfz 250/9**, metal barrel for the Tamiya kit, price TBA; 35424, **German license plates**, **Waffen SS decals and brass set 1**, \$16.95; 35428, **Decals for Wehrmacht license plates**,



\$4.95; 35430, **Decals for German license plates**, 6.95; 35451, **Tiger II engine mesh**, 2 round and 4 rectangular screens with separate frames for the Tamiya kit, \$8.95; 35459, **Decals for "Stahlhelm" Luftwaffe**, 10 sets of helmet decals, \$3.95.

The quality overall is pretty good and we especially enjoyed some of the update sets, which are very comprehensive and many of them include small white metal parts.

The line seems to grow practically every day and we strongly suggest contacting VLS to keep up on it all.

Fine Molds

We don't hear much from this Japanese manufacturer. They are mostly into planes and what info we do get, we really have to dig for.

It turns out that Chesapeake Model Designs is starting to do some limited importing of the Fine Molds line, so this should change a bit. Cool.

Recently released is FM10, **Type 97 light tank (Te-Ke)**. This is one of the better values in armor today containing a full interior, link-to-link tracks, etched parts and two figures.

Although it's not advertised as such, it can be built as one of two versions, as well. CMD's retail is listed at \$41.95.

One brand spanking new item from Fine Molds is FM11, **Type 3 medium tank (Chi-Nu)**. This is the final version of the Type 97 medium tank, of which two versions have been previously available through Tamiya. The Chi-Nu had a larger turret that mounted a 75mm gun. It also differs from the

earlier Type 97 around the front mantlet. The kit is an all new Fine Molds tool that contains vinyl/plastic tracks. CMD's retail here is \$43.95.

For more information on CMD see their ad on page 13.

Friulmodellismo

Friul continues to update their older line of white metal tracks with the new "pinned" system. This is pinned in the sense that it uses steel wire to actually form small pins, just like a real tank.

Recently converted is ATL-18, **M13/40 track**, which also can be used on M11/39, Semovente M40 75/18, M40, M13, M14/41, M15/42 and M42. Retail \$39.95.

Brand new to the line are ATL-45, T-26, for the new Italeri/Zvesda kit or the old RPM nasties and ATL-46, **Turan/Zrinyi**, no doubt for any of the resin kits hanging around (or plastic kits yet to come?). Both sets retail for \$39.95 each.

Chesapeake Model Designs is Friul's U.S. importer.

Grandt Line

Grandt Line was showing off a couple of new items at Chicago for this year. 128, **Hex nut, bolt, no washer**, \$2.05 and 163, **Star nut, bolt, washer (100 pieces)**, \$2.05. This latter item contains perfect little star shapes, use: unknown. Both products are superbly molded in styrene and their addition to your parts box will undoubtedly spark a dozen or so uses.

Look for Grandt Line products wherever railroad model accessories are sold and come armed

with the above listed stock numbers.

Greif Modeling Accessories

A relatively new line from Mexico, Greif specializes in all things teeny and accessory oriented. Here are a few of the latest items divided into their sub categories.

Resin gear and accessories: 012, **Wooden boxes**, 12 per set, \$10.25; 023, **M115/V100 horns**, 8 per set, \$5.50; 024, **Bosch lights**, includes 2 completely detailed lights with separate front covers and two clear lights to put inside, \$9.95.

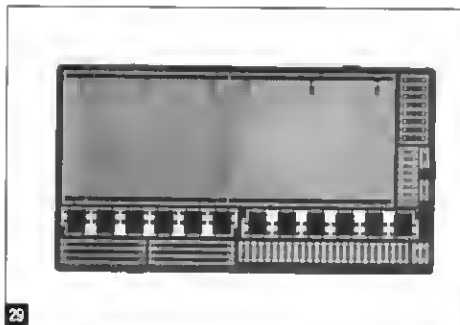
Tools: 350, **hex nut and bolt maker**; 351, **hex nut maker**; 352, **round rivet maker**; 353, **conical rivet maker**; 354, **square nut maker**; 355, **square nut and bolt maker**; 356, **flat rivet maker**; 450, **glue station**, Teflon-coated metal plate for mixing paint, epoxy, etc., also serves as a palette for paints, superglue, and more, \$12.95.

Prices for all other items TBA. Greif products are available exclusively from VLS.

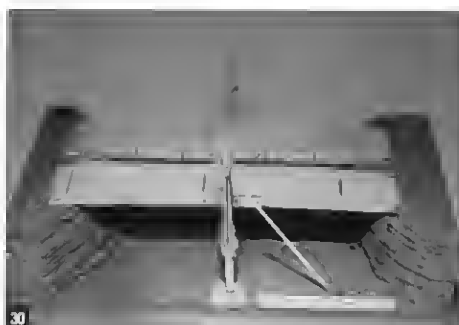
Hobby Fan

Who? Hobby Fan is the export agent in Taiwan for AFV Club. In addition to the AFV Club kits, they are now offering a line of resin and white metal kits and conversions.

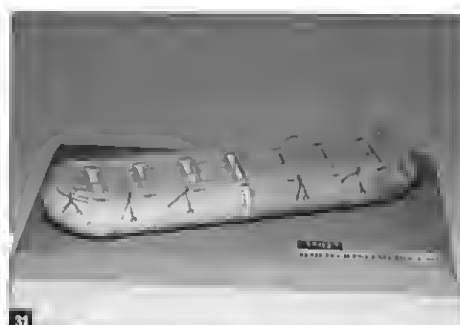
First up is 001, **M110A2**. This is a conversion/update set for the Italeri M110 series of kits for \$34.98. 002, is a **M52A1**, which is the post-war SPG based on the chassis of the M-41. Retail \$99.98. 003, **M50 Ontos**, is the wacky six-barreled recoilless rifle carriage used by the Marines for \$99.98. 004 is none other than the **M5 High Speed**



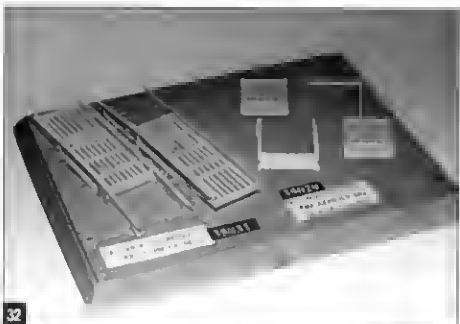
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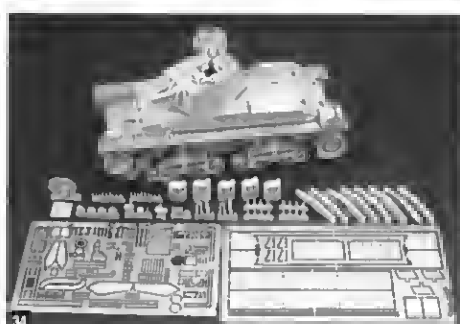
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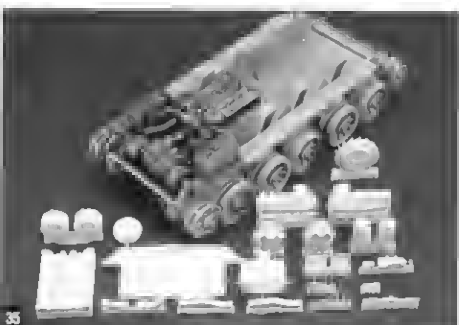


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34

29. Eduard's Jagdpanzer IV/70A mesh skirts (one of two sheets).
30. The main part of the PSP Treadway System.
31. PSP's Pontoon section for the Treadway Bridge.
32. The individual sections and the Treadway ramps.
33. Royal's new T-34 update and detailing set.
34. Their same treatment of the Czechoslovak 35(t) kit.
35. Royal's T-34 engine compartment set.
36. The new GAZ-66 truck from Scale Limited.
37. Tamiya's new 6x6 truck accessory set.
38. The brand new Tamiya 95mm Centaur howitzer kit.
39. Tank Workshop's fording kit for the M8.
40. The fording kit for the M3 halftrack from TWS.
41. YANKS new Cargo Load #2 for the GMC truck.
42. Cargo Load #3 from YANKS.
43. Cargo Load #2 in action!
44. Yoshida Design's Meuse grill breech.
45. The new Zvezda Panzerjäger I kit.



35



36

Tractor, hauler of the 155mm howitzer for \$99.98. 005 is the **M911 Heavy Equipment Transporter**. This is one of the U.S. Army's tank transporters (it's basically a huge truck) and was used in the Gulf and in Somalia. It's not quite sturdy enough for the M1A1 or A2, but it was used for all the lighter duties. This kit retails for \$99.98. Rumor has it that the trailer also will be offered.

The U.S. rep for these kits is The Right Stuff Distributors in sunny CA (address and phone on page 28). One retail contact we know of is Legends Toys & Hobbies also in California. See their ad on page 32.

Hornet/Wolf

After languishing for some time without a proper U.S. distributor, the entire Hornet and Wolf line of products is now offered by our buddies at VLS Mail Order.

We do know that the line is fully stocked and this is great news for fans of Wolf and you Hornet head junkies out there. Go to it.

Hudson & Allen Studio

Some great new accessories from these guys in Michigan. And, yes, they still are trying to find a way to get fog into a spray can. 9606, **Gutters and down spout**, \$8.95; 9607, **Plumbing**, \$8.95; 9708, **C-ration boxes**, \$12.95; 9801, **German personnel markings**, 1/9 and 1/16 decals, \$8.95.

For more information see a hobby shop near you or contact Hudson & Allen Studio Inc., P.O. Box 1905, Monroe, MI 48161. Phone (734) 457-2171, fax (734) 457-2179.

Jaguar

Before we get started on our list of new stuff, a couple of changes in product numbers straight from the Jaguar's mouth: 63084, **Steyer 1500 Crew**, set of 2, \$19.98 (previously listed as 63085); 63085, **Sdkfz 250 riders**, set of 2, \$19.98. 63525, **Berg Elephant conversion**, the recovery vehicle conversion for Italeri kit, \$23.98; 63526, **Jagdpanther G interior**, a complete interior for Tamiya kit, with separate roof with detail, \$45.98.

Now for the new stuff. 63086, **Setting the trap, East Prussia 1945**, a German tank hunter "booby traps" a road by setting up a Panzerfaust on a gatepost, 1 figure with base, \$14.98; 63087, **The Defenders, East Prussia 1945**, a German officer directs the fire of soldier holding a Panzerfaust, 2 figures, \$19.98; 63088, **German snipers, Operation Barbarossa**, 2 German snipers preparing to set up an ambush, 2 figures with base, \$23.98; 63089, **The Tunnel Rat, 'Nam '68**, American soldier handing his M16 to companion as he prepares to enter the vast warren of underground tunnels in Vietnam, 2 figures with base, \$23.98; 63090, **The Last Defenders III Berlin 1945**, Hitler Jugend receives last minute instructions from experienced veteran for using Panzerfaust, 2 figures, \$23.98; 63091, **Berlin sewer, The Final Chapter-Berlin 1945**, a Russian soldier captures member of Volksturm in his sewer hiding place, 2 figures with base, \$23.98; 63092, **Have a Light? 1945**, a German soldier lights his buddy's cigarette, 2 figures, \$19.98; 63093, **Luftwaffe officers, North Italy, 1944**, two Luftwaffe officers on R&R in the Italian Alps, 2 figures, \$24.98; 63094, **Poncho**

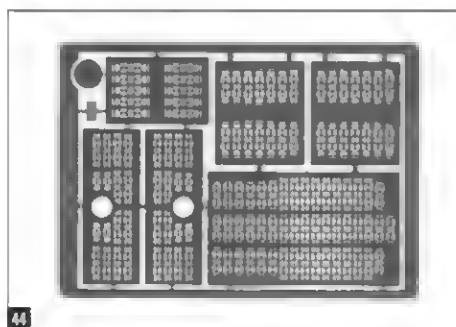
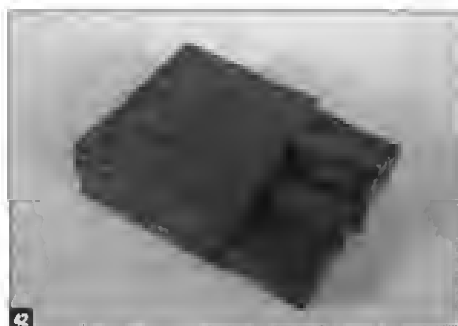
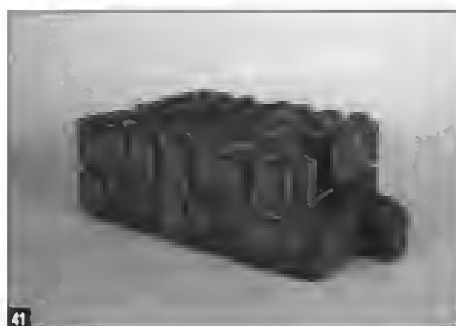
stretcher bearers, 3 German soldiers carrying wounded comrade with make shift poncho stretcher, 4 figures, \$29.98; 63095, **"Steamboat Willy" and his captor**, 2 figure set shows "Steamboat Willy" surrendering to his captor, as seen in the movie Saving Private Ryan, \$23.98; 63824, **Cromwell wheels**, 63839, price TBA; **M8/M20 engine compartment**, comes complete with fire walls, engine and new tail piece for Tamiya kit, \$15.98; 63840, **European street signal lights**, accessories for urban setting dioramas, \$7.98; 63841, **European street lights and signs**, \$7.98; 63842, **Lynx detail set**, for ICM Lynx kit, \$15.98; 63843, **European fountain set #2**, second in a series of fountain collections, \$13.98.

63902, **M551 Sheridan road wheels and individual track links**, first injection plastic item from Jaguar, designed for the Tamiya and Academy kits, \$17.98.

Link Model Workshop

Link Model is responsible for the new link-to-link seen in the On Track Model kits coming out of Hong Kong (these are the non-workable type). They are also beginning to release them separately and have announced some completely new sets.

001, **H35/H39**, for the Heller kit of this French WW2 tank, includes resin drive sprockets; 002, **WW2 German 'Elefant'**, for the Italeri series. U.S. prices are TBA, but we expect them to be quite reasonable. All will be available from On Track Model Co. whose U.S. importer is R&J Enterprises. Keep your eyes peeled in the magazine for even more releases.



Minimeca

Minimeca has a large range of rod, wire and tubing for detailing armor. Some of the newest is 3502, **Panzerwerfer tubes**, which includes 10 tubes, 10 each of three external rings, and stainless steel wire to form the launchers for either the Nebelwerfer or the Panzerwerfer. Neat, huh? Complete instruction is included for \$47.98. 3503, is a replacement Panther tool tube, for \$2.95.

MR Models

More new stuff from this German company, which produces a wide array of armor kits, conversions and accessories. All numbers are preceded with the prefix "MR." 10, **Japanese command tank, Type 97, Shi-Ki conversion**, \$25.95; 46, **M88A1GA1 interior (Bundeswehr)**, for the AFV Club kit, U.S. price TBA; 3527, **Sherman M4A4 "Burma", detail set**, U.S. price TBA; 3528, **Sherman Firefly Vc, detail set**, U.S. price TBA; 3595, **FT17, detail set for RPM kit**, U.S. price TBA; SP6, **Capital Letters & Numerals, (2.5mm)**, \$13.50; SP10, **VK 4501(P) Elefant hubcaps**, \$13.50; SP11, **Clear headlight lenses, 3.5mm and 4mm diameter**, \$12.50.

MR Model products are available exclusively through VLS Mail Order.

On Track Models

Also a surprise or two (or three) up the sleeves of our friends in Hong Kong. Their very latest is 35006, **WW2 German Hotchkiss 39H(f) tank**, this includes the injection plastic track mentioned above. Their next new kit will be 35007, **WW2**

German Pz Ie VK601c. This will also include injection plastic track and it is due to be released in Hong Kong in January of 1999.

As usual these kits are all-resin affairs and they tend to concentrate on the weird Wehrmacht subjects. The casting quality has always been first rate and we eagerly await each new kit!

All prices are TBA. You can get these resin kits in the U.S. from R&J Enterprises. See their ad on page 4. In Hong Kong, contact On Track directly at 852-2951-9962.

Precision Models

No new arty this time round, but we do get a few new plaster and resin architectural accessories from this Belgian company. 35.035C, **Berlin ruins**; 35.036D, **Brick Wall Fence**; 35.037B, **Panzer II turret in bunker**; 35.038B, **Panzer III turret in bunker**. All these kits are cleanly molded in white plaster. For more information regarding U.S. pricing contact Chesapeake Model Designs.

For additional product information contact Precision Models, Elf Septemberlaan 24, B-3660 Opglabbeek, Belgium. Phone 32-089-85-30-34. Fax 32-089-85-83-22. Web site <http://www.ping.be/p4u00782/Index.htm> and e-mail precisionmodels@ping.be

Precision Parts/Eduard

Those guys at Precision Parts, formerly known as Eduard, have a lot of brass. And they keep sending it to us so that we can let you know about it. Without further ado, here's the latest: 35187, **StuG IV Early type**, two sheets for the older Tamiya kit,

\$19.99; 35189, **T-55A (M)**, lots of brass for the ESCI kit, \$19.99; 35196, **Steyr 1500A/01**, one brass sheet and acetate gauges for the newish Tamiya kit, \$11.99; 35197, **Jagdtiger (SdKfz 186)**, two big brass sheets and some acetate gauges for the DML kits, \$19.99; 35198, **PUMA SdKfz 234/2**, brass and acetate for the Italeri kit, \$19.99; 35199, **JagdPZ IV/70(A) Zwischen Losung**, one large and one small sheet of brass for the older Tamiya kit, \$14.99; 35200, **M8 Greyhound**, brass and acetate for the also newish Tamiya kit, \$14.99; 35201, **JagdPZ IV/70(A) mesh**, two large sheets of brass mesh for the Dragon kits, \$19.99 and 35203, **T-64A**, two sheets for the SKIF kit, \$19.99.

Eduard brass sets may be purchased from Precision parts or through your favorite hobby shop or retail mail order source.

PSP Maquettes

PSP, as many of you may know, hails from France, where the number of French people seems to increase everyday. They have gone and executed the U.S. Army's Treadway Bridging System in resin. The PSP "system" is composed of four separate items. All of which can be used separately or together to form a larger bridge section.

They are 35027, **M2 Treadway Bridging System**, sections with jack stands; 35028, **Pontoon section**; 35029, **M2 treadway ramps** (included with 35027); 35030, **Jack Stands for M2 treadway Bridge** (included with 35027); 35031, **M2 Treadway Bridge Sections** (included with 35027). All U.S. prices TBA, but we can tell you that

the frame prices were rather hefty, so a complete bridge may be a pretty penny to construct.

Squadron and The Red Lancers both stock PSP, but no word as to if they will be carrying these items.

Resicast

And speaking of bridges, the other major bridging system in the WW2 Allied livery is also on-line, this time thanks to Resicast. It is the famous **Bailey Bridge**. It is sold as a set of five sections, which is highly convenient. The main set is 35150, listed as **Bailey Bridge**, while the extra sections are 35151, **Bailey Extensions**. The kits are mostly resin, but the girder sections are supplied in the form of white pre-made styrene parts. U.S. retail is still to be determined.

Also new from Resicast are two conversions for the new Tamiya Jeep. The first is 35147, **Airborne Jeep and Trailer**. This is resin and etched parts to create the lighter weight version of the Jeep and it includes the airborne trailer, as well. These were used by both the Brits and the U.S. airborne forces. The second item 35148, **Airborne Jeep Ambulance**, is along similar lines, with all the air portable features including those unique to the ambulance version.

The Red Lancers is your primary contact in the U.S. for Resicast items. See their ad on page 27 for more information.

Royal Model

It is always a pleasure to receive new information on Royal update sets. They are consistently well-done and it seems that they always address the deficiencies of the subject kit perfectly. Here's the latest dope.

185, T34-85, **Model 1944**, is for the DML kit 6066. It is a very involved set that includes two substantial sized sheets of brass and about twenty resin parts. The etched parts even include the entire set of fenders and stowage boxes.

186, PzKpfw 35(t)/Skoda LT vz.35, is for the CMK kit and it also includes two big sheets of etched parts. Again, we get a full set of fenders, along with perhaps three dozen other etched bits. Another two dozen resin parts are provided and taken all together it appears that just about every shortcoming of the kit is covered. Get yourself a set of Friul tracks and go to town!

187, T34-85 **Model 1944**, is also for use with Dragon kit 6066 and it follows up the first set with parts for the engine compartment. This is an all resin deal and it includes an engine module, transmission and other parts.

Royal is represented in the U.S. by Chesapeake Model Designs.

Scale Limited

Another of CMD's recent imports, Scale Limited has only the one kit that we know of. It is C783501, GAZ-66, the modern Russian truck. This is a very nice little kit of the cab-over truck and it retails for \$30. It was used by the Soviets (and is still in use), as well as its many pals around the globe, including Iraq.

Scale Model Accessories

Here's a very interesting idea. Single use rub down stencils. The first set in what may become a whole line, is for the **Tamiya M8 Armored Car**. The set is composed of a thin film which is contained by a carrier film. The idea is to rub down the stencil on the model, leaving the miniature stencil neatly stuck to the surface. Apply a light layer of color and then remove the stencil by gently dabbing the area with the piece of low-tack tape. This would certainly eliminate the fuzzy look imparted

by some of the rigid stencils, which is due to not being able to get the stiff metal material to lie perfectly flat against the surface of the model. A highly intriguing idea and the only drawback we can see is that the stencil can only be used once.

The M8 set may also fit the Italeri kit. Future plans also call for a set of markings for the Tamiya M26 Dragon Wagon. The retail price of the M8 set will be \$5.00.

Interested parties can contact Scale Model Accessories, 160 Green Street, Middlesex, EN3 7LB, United Kingdom.

Tamiya

Get ready! Get Set! Get out your best modeling work. **Tamiya/Con '99** is coming Friday and Saturday, March 26 and 27, 1999, at Tamiya America, Inc., Aliso Viejo, California. Master Model and Director's Choice category winners will have an opportunity to win a trip to Japan to attend the Shizuoka Hobby Show, Japan's finest hobby show. For additional information, call 1-800-TAMIYA-A or 949-362-2240.

And when you win at Tamiya/Con, you can get a display case, 73004 **Display Case C**, for your 1/35, 1/24 or 1/20 scale model. May not be suitable for motorcycles or tanks with long barrels, priced at \$19.00.

Other newish items from Tamiya are: 35229, **Allied Vehicles Accessory Kit**, which includes jerry cans, folded sleeping bags, steel drums, duffel bags and more, \$10.00; 35231, **U.S. 2.5 ton 6x6 cargo truck accessory set**, includes two canvas side doors, jerry can racks, jerry can holders, M36 gun mount (with .50 cal) with ammo box and more, \$7.50; 35232, **Centaur Mk.IV with 95mm howitzer**, features the larger 95mm howitzer, perforated road wheels and other turret and hull variations, including a dial sight guard and big ol' decal sheet. Look for this item in February 1999, Price TBA.

In the rumor department we are hearing about Tamiya cranking up its Panzer IV franchise again, with the first item being the Whirlwind. This is just a rumor now, so take it with the proverbial grain of salt until we can give you the proper stock numbers.

Target Model

Target is being offered through On Track Model of Hong Kong and we're not sure if this is a outside line or rather an extension of their existing line. The first item is 001, **Wiesel I MK20**, complete engine and driver compartment for AFV Club kit. This will be available from On Track Model Co. directly and through R&J in the U.S.

The Tank Workshop

Emphasis here must be on the word "workshop" because these guys just keep producing cool stuff. And it goes like this. TW0088, **LRDG Chevrolet tires and spares**, set of 6, \$12.00; TW0089, **G.I. gas cans with trays**, set of 6, \$6.00; TW0090, **U.S. 5 gallon oil cans**, set of 5, \$5.00; TW0091, **Sherman M4 rear air vents**, \$5.00; TW0092, **Pershing 90mm canvas-covered muzzle brake**, \$3.50; TW2040, **SdKfz 7 front wheels**, \$3.50; TW2041, **PzKpfw III 50mm barrel with canvas sleeve**, \$5.00.

Photo-etch armor detail sets from Ordnance Models: A26, **M3 half-track deep wading kit**, \$9.00; A34, **M8 Greyhound deep wading kit**, \$9.50.

The Testor Corporation

The Testor/Italeri line is starting to flame. There are a few tantalizing kits in the (and your) near future. Here's what we know so far (release dates are all 1999). 0297, will be the **ZIS-5, Soviet WW2 truck**, priced at \$19.50; 0359, **T-26, Soviet**

medium tank, \$23.50 (this is an all new Zvesda item and bears no resemblance to the horror of the RPM kits); 0365, **Leopard 2 A5**, available February, \$27.00; 0366, **M-20 Armored Car**, available June, \$20.00; 0367, **M-925 5-ton shelter truck**, available September, \$20.00; 0368, **Opel Blitz shelter truck**, available September, \$20.00; 0369, **M-995 TOW Hummer**, available May, \$15.00; 0370, **sWS/Flak 43**, available December, \$27.00; 0371, **Demag D7 w/2cm Flak**, available December, \$23.50 and 0372, **Paladin SP howitzer**, available December, \$27.00.

Some of the above is long awaited, especially the D7 and the Paladin.

We don't have any details on the last few items other than their descriptions, but we will bring you more information as it becomes available.

Ultracast

These guys are laying down a serious reputation for good stuff. The past year has seen them release several excellent figure sets. A few accessory items are up this time around.

135003, **2 gallon petrol/water cans, British WW2**, \$7.95; 135004, **2 gallon petrol/water cans, British WW2 in vehicle mounted racks**, \$7.95. Both products can be ordered direct by including \$4.50 shipping and handling. Address inquiries to Ultracast, P.O. Box 2005, Woodlawn Postal Outlet, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1H 6H6; fax 519-823-1160; e-mail ucast@sentez.net

VM/Maquette

The following is somewhat of a review list except for the first product. **Omega K Ural 4320 truck (6x6)**, is the newbie. This is an injection molded plastic kit that includes rubber tires with an accurate pattern for \$35.00. We've seen this and it's a very detailed and elaborate kit of the Soviet post-war workhorse.

The following kits have been around for a while but are now being stocked by Chesapeake Model Designs. **T34/85**, with individual track links, air intake on upper rear hull has vinyl screen to glue inside the frame, no after market piece is needed, composite turret for \$21.00; **T34/76**, same as above, but with model '43 turret, \$21.00; **Panzer 38(t)G**, injection molded plastic, interior, individual plastic track links, \$20.00; **V-2 diesel engine and transmission**, injection molded plastic, can be used with any T34 series vehicle, price TBA; **T34/85 track**, plastic injection molded tracks, can also be used with any T34 based vehicles for \$12.

Yanks

Lots and lots of new goodies from the Yanksters. 9728, **Cargo load #2, jerry cans**, \$15.00; 9729, **Cargo load #3, Sherman ammo crates**, \$15.00; 9737, **U.S. Field Workshop #2**, workbench with truck engine and parts, \$15.00; 9738, **Italian Campaign Panther Stellung**, German in-ground pillbox with tank turret, \$TBA; 9739, **Italian Campaign portable German pillbox**, available March, \$TBA; 9740, **Bomb craters**, 2 medium size shell craters, \$21.00; 9741, **U.S. Bailey bridge**, full-size, single-span, complete kit, no scratch building required, available April \$TBA; 9742, **Fighting positions**, one-man resin drop-in foxhole, \$16.50; 9743, **Fighting positions**, 2-man resin drop-in foxhole, \$16.50; 9744, **Fighting positions**, crew served weapon pit, available February, \$19.95; 9745, **U.S. GI infantrymen in overcoats**, 3 figures warming themselves by a fire, \$32.00; 9746, **U.S. Marine Corps doghandler**, figure with white metal Doberman, Pacific theater, available March, \$12.95; 9747, **U.S. infantrymen on the march**, 2 figures in summer attire, available March, \$19.95; 9748, **I20 mm U.S. tanker - Normandy #2**, companion fig-

ure for 9734, available March, \$39.95; 9749, U.S. tank riders #3, 5 figures USMC, available March, \$51.00; 9750, European refugees on the move, 3 figures, including woman with baby, young child and old man, available April, \$31.00; 9751, GI stretcher team, 5 figures suitable for summer of 1943 Pacific theater or Italy, available April, \$51.00; 9752, Yank, the Army weekly, 12 covers of popular WW2 wartime magazine, \$10.00; 9754, Stars and Stripes newspapers, 20 front pages of Mediterranean Theater Edition, \$10.00; 9756, U.S. 120mm Hero Worship, U.S. WW2 paratrooper with base, available March, \$45.00.

Yoshida Designs

New from this designer of nifty-neato etched sets is YDA08, Maus intake grills. The set is designed to fit the DML kit and it retails for \$12.00. It represents the odd interlaced screen pattern seen on the underside of the large engine deck grills.

Some shops stock these sets and those that want to (and you) can contact them at Yoshida Designs, P.O. Box 2312 Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4A6, Canada. Phone/fax (204) 452-2991, e-mail: yoshida@mhnet.mb.ca. Their web site is pretty cool, check it out at <http://www.mbnet.mb.ca/~yoshida/>

Zvezda

A few of the brand new Panzerjäger I, have crept in under the Zvesda label. This is the Czech 47mm mounted on the old Italeri kit. It contains a couple of more sprues and that proper silver vinyl tracks, all for \$22. These kits are available from Chesapeake Model Designs. Look for kit number 3537.



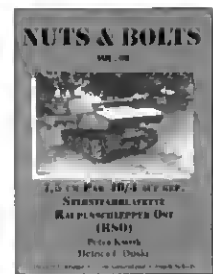
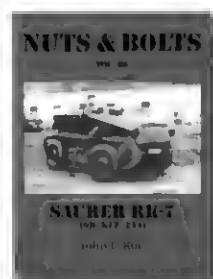
Book Reviews

Saurer RK-7 (Sd.Kfz.254)

by John L. Rue
Nuts & Bolts, Vol. 5
Soft cover
42 pages, B&W
\$20.00

7.5cm PAK40/4 Auf. gep., Selbstfahrlafette Raupenschlepper Ost (RSO)

by Peter Kwok and Heiner F. Duske
Nuts & Bolts, Vol. 9
Soft cover
48 pages, B&W
\$20.00



THESE ARE THE TWO LATEST IN this long running series of reference booklets on German armor of WW2. Somewhat out of order, number 5, gives a very rare glimpse into the life and death of the Saurer RK-7. This is the so called "wheel-cum track" vehicle which was developed for the Wehrmacht in the pre-war years.

The guys at Nuts & Bolts have rounded up a superb collection of combat and operational photos of the little beast (could there be many more?) and these are supplemented with evaluation photos of the vehicle taken by both the British and the Americans.

The balance of the publication is devoted to contemporary photos taken of the recovered American vehicle. This was on display at Aberdeen for a number of years and is now in the possession of the Bundeswehr, who will presumably restore it.

As has been typical of the series, all the above is accompanied by a well-executed set of 1/35th scale drawings.

Those of you who are considering the purchase of the Armour Accessories kit will want to have this one on the bench.

The second new title in the series is also the subject of a recent kit. Plopping the PAK 40 onto the RSO was a way of bringing cheap mobile anti-tank power to the Panzerjäger units of infantry divisions (oddly, this vehicle was first deployed to a Ski-Jäger unit!).

Again the authors have rooted out a fascinating series of war time photos. These are again followed by contemporary restoration shots. This time they are of a completely restored vehicle on display at the WTS Museum in Koblenz Germany. These photos follow the course of the restoration in addition to showcasing the vehicle in every detail.

The RSO title is also accompanied by line drawings and these even include detailed views of the suspension and the travel locks.

Both publications have demonstrated the continued development of the series by providing more photos, additional development history and information on markings. Good show.

Schwere Panzer in Detail

by Bruce Culver and Uwe Feist
Ryton Publications
Hard cover
170 pages, B&W photos and color drawings
\$45.00
ISBN 0-9633824-9-7



friend, the King Tiger. We have been waiting for this one and we are pretty excited about its arrival.

This book is typical of all Ryton books in that it's brimming with large, clear archival photos. Also mixed right in are dozens and dozens of detail shots of surviving vehicles, as well as line drawings. The result, as always, is a tremendously balanced view of the subject.

Also typical of Ryton publications, there are several of the kick-ass full-color illustrations by Uwe Feist. At least a couple of these are "off the fender" dramatic 3/4 shots that we thoroughly enjoyed.

Covered in the same fashion are the Jagdtiger and the Elephant, with some superb photos of both we had not seen before.

Perhaps one of the most impressive photos we have ever seen and worth the price of the book alone, is a crystal-clear full page color photo of King Tiger number 332. This is the former tank of Kampfgruppe Peiper that was, until recently, slowly melting into the sod in Aberdeen, Maryland. Amazingly, this tank was once housed in a clean and well-lit hall. This is where the photo was taken and it shows the vehicle in all it's three tone splendor. It's very thought provoking, especially in comparison with photos taken of the surviving and pristine StuG G located at Ft. Knox (coincidentally the current home of the newly restored, but unfortunately completely repainted, 332).

Worth the wait, worth the money. Got yours yet?

Uniforms of the SS 1938-45

by Yoshihiro Terui & BSK
Dai Nippon Kaiga Co., Ltd., 1998
84 pages, color with a few black and white photos
\$39.95
ISBN 4-499-22687-2



A COUPLE OF NEW titles from the producers of such publications as Model Graphix, Armour Modelling and Achtung Panzer.

This highly detailed square format book is a

full-color guide to SS uniforms. There are hundreds of individual color plates, including close-ups of tunics, trousers, smocks, head gear, field gear and insignia.

The publication is extraordinarily comprehensive, especially considering its small size. It contains English captions throughout, just beneath the Japanese ones. The brief history of the SS in the back of the book is entirely in Japanese, but there are plenty of other sources for such information.

Snappy in design and beautifully printed, this title is recommend for all those interested in the subject. Figure painters will, undoubtedly, run to grab a copy.

Der Panzerkampfwagen, Tiger an der Front (Bildband and Tiger Fibel im Bild)

by Tomioka Yoshikatsu and Kobayashi Motofumi
Dai Nippon Kaiga Co., Ltd., 1998
160 pages, B&W throughout
\$39.95
ISBN 4-499-22688-0




THIS COMPACT BOOK IS THE result of the discovery of a previously unpublished set of photos found in the French national archive. Perhaps this publication and others due out in the future, will help to dispel the myth of the two fish trucks loaded with the entire photographic

archive of the German army, one of which drove off into oblivion at the end of WW2. We know that one was captured by the Americans and we now think it's safe to assume the other was captured by the French.

Many of the shots contained in the book have companion shots that appear in other books, some of which are attributed to the Federal Archive In Germany or from private collectors. This makes for a fascinating 55 year old jigsaw puzzle that is only now becoming complete.

Almost all of the shots are large and clear and they all showcase the kind of details that modelers crave. There is an interesting cross section of vehicle types and locations including Russia, France and Tunisia. Each photo or series of photos is very clearly identified as to location and date.

The back-end of the book is made up of a 40-page modern version of the Tiger Fibel instruction manual, remade in the style of the original using contemporary artwork and illustrations very well done in a realistic cartoon style. The entire Tiger Fibel contains English captions, as does the rest of the book, which gives them about equal space.

Definitely one for the collection of all Tiger devotees. 

Bovington: The Tank Museum



The following is a new feature to MMiR that will give you a brief glance on some of the armor museums around the world.

This, folks, is the place. However you get here, just do it. And don't say you can't afford it; as I'm writing this, some weirdo is rowing across the Atlantic. Probably a destitute tread head, on the way to Mecca. For presentation of exhibits and possession of vehicles of historical significance, Bovington takes the prize.

The curator is noted author (and modeler) David Fletcher. He was recently promoted from librarian and indeed still fills that post. The library contains an immense number of AFV photos, so David can be extremely helpful to modelers in need and is a genuinely nice guy. Keep your request concise, though, 'cause he's as busy as can be.

The museum is broken into several sections by historical era. There is a large group of WWI tanks, most sporting their original camouflage. Pretty much the whole gamut of the rhomboid shaped Brit tanks are here, along with a pristine FT-17 and a Whippet that carried a Royal Tank Regiment lieutenant (leftenant?) to a Victoria Cross.

And, of course, there's "Little Willie", the first tank. Yep, the first. That gash in the front plate is the result of somebody trying to tow the little beast; the guy ran a cable through the two view slots, apparently not realizing that Willie was made not from armor plate but thin mild steel. The cable cut the hull like butter.

An extensive 'between the wars' section shows

such beauties as the big Vickers Independent, with its multiple turrets, a la T-35 (but the Vickers was the inspiration for the Russian giant). The Vickers "Six-Tonner" that spawned the huge T-26 family is on display, while right across the aisle is a big and ungainly looking Lanchester armored car. And in a corner, almost out of sight, is a beautiful little Citroen half-tracked car. (It would fit right in my garage...how 'bout it, David?)

The WWII section, the largest of the museum, contains such gems as "Michael," the oldest Sherman extant; it's possibly a mild steel prototype. It was the original presented to the British Purchasing Mission. Included in the extensive German section is a Luchs; there can't be too many of these, as only a hundred were built. An Italian CV-35 Lanceflamme is also shown, notable because most of these lightly armored tin cans wound up as scrap metal strewn across battlefields around the world.

Of course, there are many Brit vehicles, including a sampling of just about all armored (armoured?) car types. And there are some rarities here, too. The humongous eight wheeled Boarhound, built to fight in the desert but delivered long after the war had left the sand, must be the only one left; only a few were built.

The Tamiya Hall (yes, that Tamiya) is primarily concerned with modern, i.e. post-war armor, although holding down a large chunk of concrete is TOG, the throwback to the WWI tanks proposed by a group of WWI designers (The Old Gang get it? heh, heh). There's a Swedish "S" tank here, for variety and a Conqueror in all its glory, along with some Leopards and other new stuff I had to read the placards to identify.

Not so much with the later stuff, but the early vehicles are surrounded by framed memorabilia of various types, like framed newspaper articles and citations. Some of the WWI types are staffed by mannequins with proper uniforms; how would you like to go into combat wearing some steel mesh over your face to protect your eyes from bullet splash? Makes you think about what the early tankers were like.

Bovington is still the British Army tank training center, so from time to time there's a roar as some big beast goes zipping by the museum. Located in Dorset, in the southwest bottom corner of England, the museum is readily accessible by train (Wool being the closest station) if you, like me, are reluctant to try driving on the 'wrong' side of the road. A letter to the museum will get you a list of recommended accommodations; the list has twenty-four entries, complete with a description (B&B, hotel, etc.), rates and a phone number.

Like most of the major armor museums, there is a "Friends" organization. Membership will get you free entry to the museum and a twice monthly magazine. Granted, that's not much for people on our side of the pond, but the money is for a worthy cause and it's great to finally whip out that red card and present it at the door!

—Joe Morgan

Museum/Friends Address

The Tank Museum
Bovington Camp, Wareham, Dorset
England BH20 6JG

That Stubborn Thing

THE NEW AND SPIFFO GERMAN 12.8 SPG FROM ON-TRACK MODEL CO.



All photos by Thomas Anderson unless noted.

There are still white dots on the modeler's map. Many models of very high interest are not available and the only way to get these gadgets is to make them by yourself. And then there are the true adventurers, making tracks where no modeler has been before! New tracks - On Track! The lads from Hong Kong were the first to make resin kits of vehicles like the Panzer IV bridge laying vehicle or the PzSfl. IV b "Dicker Max." Following this maxim of delivering first quality the PzSfl. V, sometimes referred to as "Sturer Emil" (stubborn Miles), was launched.

History of the PzSfl. V

1941! Situation seemed to be favorable for Germany. Western Europe was defeated and largely conquered. The "fortress England," however, held out. After "Operation Seelöwe" had to be dropped, Hitler turned towards new aims. In late 1940 the German general staff evaluated its own inventory of armored vehicles. Since "super heavy" British and American tanks were expected to appear on the battle field in the near future, this evaluation brought only poor results. Neither the Panzer III nor the Panzer IV seemed equal to this scenario. Ironically, the army intelligence (Fremde Heere Ost) was unaware of the most modern Soviet tanks like the KV and T-34 at this time. However, after confronting them, the German "medium" tanks were obsolete over night. Stop gap solutions (SP guns) had to be developed in emergency programs. Only the high degree of training and a generally superior tactical leadership prevented the total collapse of the eastern front in the winter of 1941/42.

The development of the PzSfl. V

(Panzerselbstfahrlafette V) has to be viewed under these premises—a stop gap solution using interesting components.

The technicians chose the largest gun available, the massive 12.8 cm gun with its outstanding capabilities. Two prototypes of the VK 3001; artifacts from the evolution of the famous Tiger tank, served as the base for this self propelled gun. This amalgamation resulted in an extremely powerful design, of which a mere two vehicles were actually built. Ballistic data was tremendous, in some confirmed battle situations T-34 tanks were destroyed at ranges in excess of 4,500 meters! Brought into action favorably, this weapons system could surely have made great use of its advantages. Thus, with a sense for irony, they were nicknamed "Sturer Emil" by the troops.

On the other hand, the PzSfl. V had lots of shortcomings. The assembly of large gun and large vehicle was not a lucky one at all. The vehicle, elongated by adding one running wheel per side; turned out to be a little too long and showed an unfavorable center of gravity. To avoid staggering after firing, both frontal and aft torsion bars were reinforced. This reduced riding comfort significantly. Due to the long ground contact of tracks, the final drives were over stressed. This problem was worsened by the fact that self-propelled guns had to follow moving targets by moving the entire vehicle. Any rough side traverse had to be made by the vehicle itself. Ambush positions were revealed easily, only because the engine had to run permanently in order to match every move of the target vehicle.

The engine, with its performance of 300 HP proved to be too weak for the 36 tons of the PzSfl. V.

Maximum speed of 20 km/h was too slow for modern mobile warfare (a German contribution...). All steering maneuvers inflicted steady wear on the engine as well, especially in muddy terrain. Since the engine was situated in the center of the fighting compartment, normal crew communication was almost impossible under combat conditions, an intercom was not provided. The excessive heat inside surely affected the crew adversely.

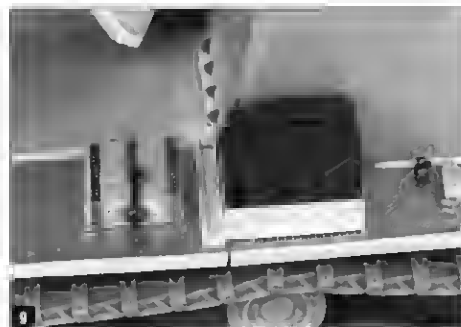
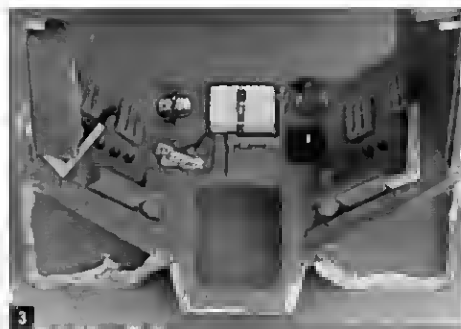
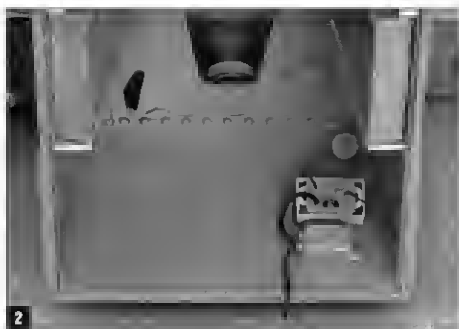
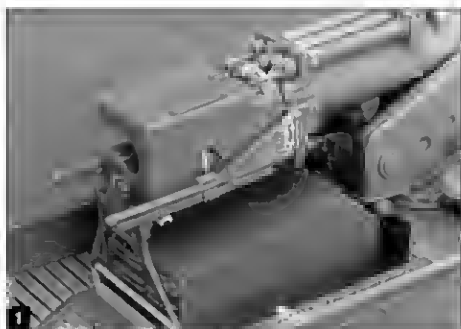
Rate of fire of the powerful gun was comparatively slow. The massive barrel had to be lowered to load after every round fired. The fact that the ammunition was of two piece type rendered loading even more difficult.

Since neither hull nor gun came from large scale production, the supply of spare parts brought severe problems for the supply units. Every small part, ammo, road wheel and gasket had to be sent on a 2,000 km journey to the eastern front. Stock-keeping at the 521. PzJ.Abt. must have been a true nightmare!

A critical judgment of these vehicles would most probably have given a negative result. The problems inflicted by these SP guns simply did not justify their front-line service. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that German tank development profited by the PzSfl. V. A mere 15 months later a most successful weapons system, the Hornisse (Nashorn), entered production.

Front-line service of the PzSfl. V

Not much is known of combat experiences of these heavy SP guns. Most probably they were not issued earlier than spring 1942. The PzJ.Abt. 521 (Panzerjäger-Abteilung—tank destroyer battalion) received both guns. At this time, the battalion's



main strength consisted of towed 5 cm Pak 38 and Panzer Jäger I (4.7 cm) tank destroyers. So both PzSfl V vehicles were a considerable improvement in regards to firepower. However, the battalion's supply officers might have thought differently. Later in 1942 two further companies equipped with Panzer Jäger II (7.62 cm) Marder II were sent to reinforce the weakened Abteilung. With this equipment, it fought its way south to Stalingrad, where it would perish in January 1943.

At that time, at least one vehicle was still operational, as the Soviets managed to capture an example in good condition. This booty was presented to the Russian public during several subsequent celebrations. It was stored for years under the open sky, until it found a final resting place in the tank museum at Kubinka, where it still can be viewed.

Remarks on both vehicles

In viewing photos of both vehicles, some small differences can be noticed. Initially, at least one vehicle had two bays mounted in front of the superstructure. On the left side, the driver was accommodated, a dummy bay at the right served as a storage box and covered the fuel cap at the same time. I will call this vehicle "Wagon 1," and the photos show some shots of it taken at Wunstorf garrison. The other vehicle, "Wagon 2," was possibly not provided with this dummy bay. The only photos known were made in the southern part of the Eastern front in summer 1942. This is the Kubinka vehicle and there are no hints, like visible welding marks, proving that there actually was a second bay. Another interesting difference is the use of unique armored head lamps. It is possible however that this

alteration was added to both vehicles.

After all—the model kit

Construction of resin kits can present some problems to the modeler. The large over pour pieces have to be removed from the sprues and cleaned, and eventually warped pieces have to be straightened. The cast quality of the On Track kit is pretty good. Some of the finer parts, however, did need some touching up.

I started basic construction with mounting the lower hull. Here I noticed that the frontal plate was severely warped. I chose the easy way and completely replaced it with .75 mm plastic sheet. The fighting compartment ground plate followed. When gluing the frontal hull cover, I added some plastic strips to the rear to get the plate level. The track covers on my kit were partially cracked and warped, and since I was going to add additional details to this area anyway, I decided to replace them with custom made ones (see below).

Now the torsion bars were fitted to the hull, supported with small plastic pieces. Here, super glue was first choice again.

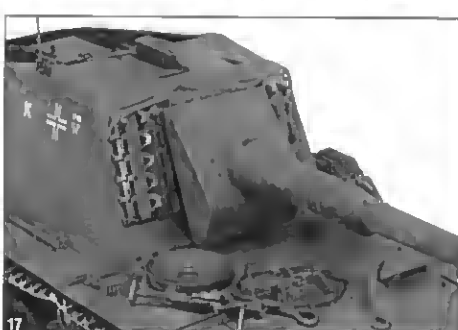
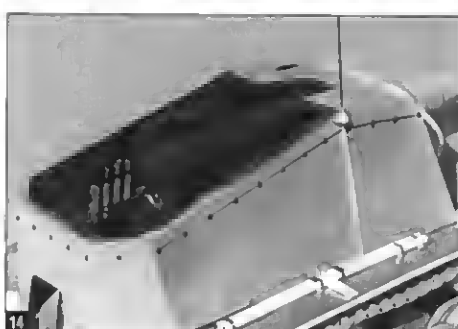
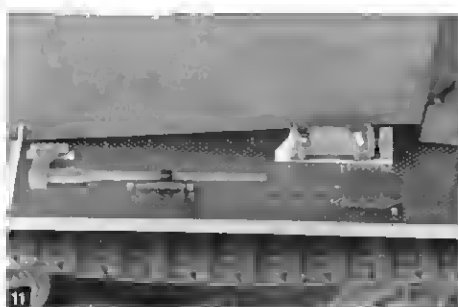
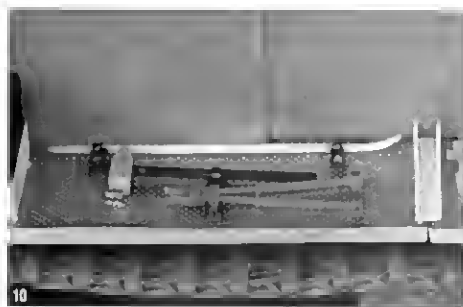
The interior

Construction of the fighting compartment was time consuming. The only help available were the beautiful photos shown in Spielberger's Tiger Book. Although I visited Kubinka twice, I was quick to notice that their "Emil" was, unfortunately, empty

1. The gun arrangement shows some few modifications. So I added the firing mechanism and improved the travel rest. 2. I replaced the kit's radio set with the much better parts of MR Models of Germany. 3. This rear view shows the improved equipment racks in the interior. 4, 5. The completed model. 6. The complete frontal plate was warped, I replaced it with .75 mm plastic. Note welding seams and damaged mud flap. 7. I added a new driver's vision device and escape hatch. 8. The gun mount was improved by adding welding seams. 9, 10, 11 (over). The Aber PE parts are of finest quality, very thin and easy to manufacture. All tools were heavily improved using Tamiya's tool set.

inside. Everything had been removed, everything except the gun. However, the On Track lads did a remarkably good job with the available reference. I just had to improve some details. So I mounted a better radio set with converter (a "Fusprech d" supplied by MR Models of Germany) on the front plate, just in front of the commander's seat. I don't think that the radio set was mounted to the commander's right side, as proposed by On Track. Although impossible to verify, I believe that no German officer would have been willing to sit with a steady sloping position of 30°. The vehicle in Kubinka shows some welding marks on the frontal plate, a hint perhaps?

Gun and cartridge cases were mounted according to the construction plan. I added the electric firing mechanism, including the wiring. The projectile mounts were left empty, since I wanted to add grenades later. Before painting the interior, the proper fit of superstructure and hull should be tested carefully. I sprayed the complete interior dark gray and some time later I repeated this using a slightly lighter gray, which was applied rather slovenly. All details like gas masks, etc., were painted on the kit.



12. The hinges of the mud flaps were made from lead foil. 13. The rear door was replaced by a new plastic part, the ladder was made new as well. 14. The complete interior was painted before assembly. 15. This rear view shows the replaced mud flaps. The plastic tracks supplied are very good. 16. The jacks' wooden rest was made entirely new. Note the fuel cap cover. 17. The completed and painted model. I used pastel chalks to simulate road dust. 18, 19. Some views into the interior. The yellow painted HE rounds give some light to the gray fighting compartment. 20. The front end and the added mud flaps. 21.

The driver's bay shows oil stains. 22. I added a tarpaulin to the roof. 23. The finished running gear. 24. The rear showing my hand painted markings. 25. Pz.SfL V, Wagon 1 in its home garrison of Wünnstorf, probably autumn 1941. Although strictly forbidden, these vehicles were portrayed quite often. The early style head lamps are evident. (Photo K. Voigt) 26. Only one year later, Wagon 2 moves slowly through the southern Russian steppes. Extra tracks were added, foliage was used to conceal the vehicle without success. Wagon 2 was fitted with two fuel cans. (Photo K. Münch)

One of the highlights of this model is the beautifully rendered gun barrel. On Track has provided a fine turned brass part. Not only is the part turned with a high degree of precision, it is also polished to a high gloss!

I prepared high explosive shells, which showed an interesting yellow finish. Since proper 128 cm rounds were not available, I used Tamiya's 10.5 cm Stull ammo instead (indeed these rounds fit perfectly into the racks). The complete interior was then spoiled with greasy and black enamel, a very thin black wash followed. I finally oversprayed the fighting compartment with semi-gloss varnish.

The proper assembly of chassis and superstructure was a most delicate procedure. I first tried several "dry" fittings, adding plastic strips wherever necessary. Then both

parts were connected using super glue. As noted above, the track covers of my model kit were warped and cracked, so I decided to exchange them completely. A chase construction was prepared using 5 mm plastic. These raw fenders were then laminated with metal etched plates by Aber of Poland, which

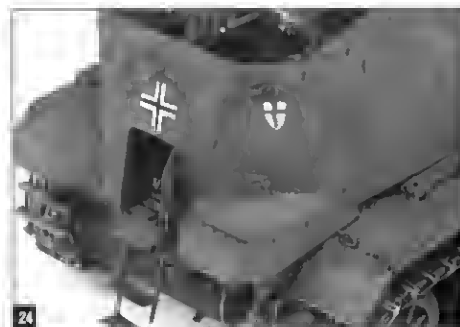
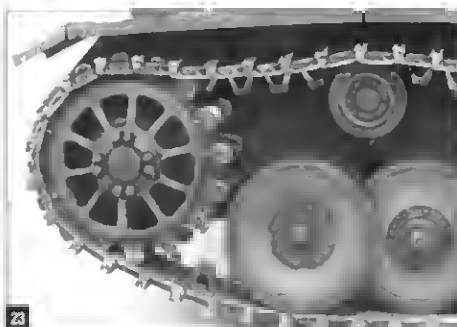
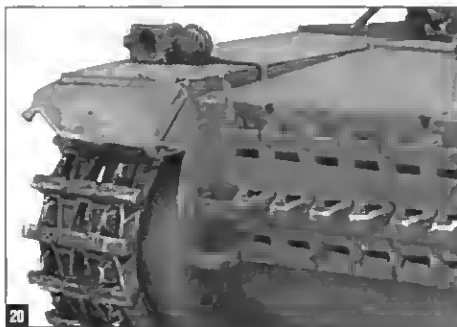
have a beautiful dot pattern (Aber number PPI5). The front and rear mudguards were made from thin metal plates, while I used lead foil to make the hinges. All screw heads were produced one by one with my trusty punch and die set.

One of the most significant aspects of this kit is that On Track has included a complete road wheel and track set in styrene. The molding is excellent and the fit is as good as any of the larger company's styrene. A beautiful first effort!

The running gear was constructed according to the construction plan. While I glued the drive sprockets and running wheels to the chassis tightly, I left the idler wheel swiveling. So I was able to "adjust" the track tension when assembling the tracks. The idler's axle was then secured by a drop of super glue.

The driver's hatch and the rear door were replaced by new parts made from .25 mm plastic. The missing fuel cap cover was added (.5 mm plastic); this is necessary only in case the dummy bay is not used.





All other details, such as tools and spare parts, were improved and some new parts were added using Tamiya's tank tool set. Although this is time consuming, it certainly pays off.

Back to the original - camo and markings

Both PzSfl. V were delivered in standard dark gray, at that time obligatory. Since the battalion perished in early 1943, a camouflage scheme is not advisable. In my opinion, dark yellow stripes over gray, or a three tone finish are not realistic. A winter wash, however, is surely possible. For these reasons I decided to paint my Emil in plain Panzergray (Humbrol 67). To make the large surfaces of the kit more vivid, I tend to over spray this dark color with a somewhat lighter shade.

The markings of Wagon 2 can be reconstructed almost entirely. In summer 1942 this vehicle showed standard German crosses on both sides, flanked by the letter "K" (army group von Kleist) and the battalion's badge. Pz.J.Abt. 521 carried a red cross in a slightly pointed white badge (in 1940 the battalion carried stag's antlers below the badge). This arrangement was repeated at the rear. I used only dry transfers, the German crosses came from a Verlinden set, the letter "K" from a standard Letraset sheet. I painted the badges using a self-made stencil, the red crosses were added free hand.

After finishing this procedure, the tools and further parts of the equipment were painted. I used a very thin wash of oil paints, which was applied carefully onto these details. Different tones were used—rust, black, wood brown. Bare metal was produced very carefully with greasy silver paint dry

brushed to edges and other details. After drying for some days, I covered the complete model with a very thin wash of black oil paint. A semi gloss varnish followed. ☒

—Thomas Anderson

(more photos overleaf)

MMIR RECCE

On-Track Model Co. 12.8 cm Selbstfahrlafette L/61 Pz sflV "Sturmer Emil." Kit number 35004. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price \$130.00.

Aber Photo-etched plates, dot pattern. Kit number PP15. Suggested retail price \$9.99.

MR Models Radio Set No. 1, Wehrmacht. Kit number A-3509. Suggested retail price \$23.95.

Tamiya PzKpfw. IV on vehicle equipment set. Kit number 35185. Suggested retail price \$4.75.

References

Der Panzer-Kampfwagen Tiger und seine abarten, by Walter J. Spielberger, Motorbuch Verlag 1994, ISBN 3-87943-456-5. The German language version (I believe this was also published in English). Excellent plans and interior photos of Emil, including many of the original VK3001 (H) prototype.

Encyclopedia of German Tanks of World War Two Revised Edition, by Peter Chamberlain and Hilary Doyle, Arms and Armour Press 1993. ISBN 1-85409-214-6. A very brief blurb on the vehicle. Some of the same shots that appear in the above title.

Groundpower No. 22, 1996-3, Delta Publishing Co., Ltd., W.W.II German Experimental Vehicles. A few of the same photos seen in the Spielberger book, but contains at least one shot (the main sight) that is unique to this publication

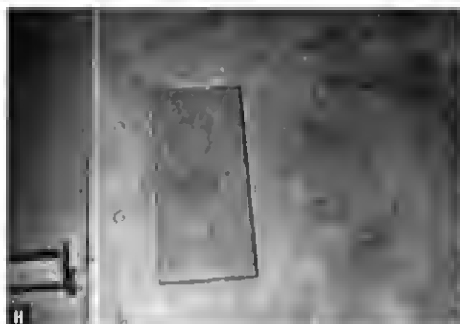
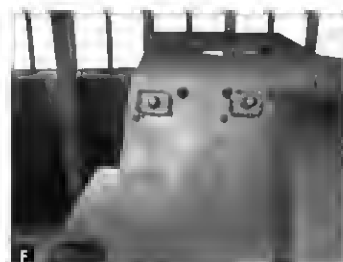
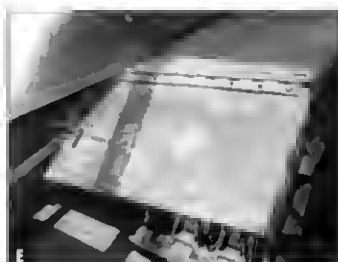
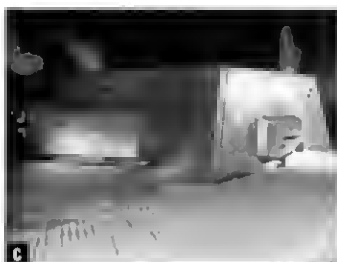
The author wants to thank S. Natrebenko, K. Münch, H. Fleischer and K. Voigt for supplying the wartime photos.

THE REAL EMIL

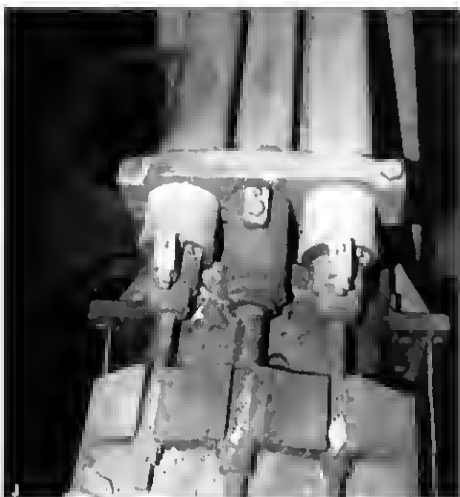
Photos by Thomas Anderson



A. Wagon 2 is now stored in one of Kubinka's large halls. B. Details of the frontal armor plate. C. The driver's bay. D. A view below the rear overhang, which provided the engine with air. Track adjustment device and towing loop are visible here. E. The rear mud flap. F. Spare track racks were mounted on both sides of the gun. G. The massive gun housing and mantlet. H. The fuel cap was hidden under this flap.



I. A view of the gun. The apertures of both gunner's periscope and commander's stereoscopic periscope (both missing) are evident here. J. The recuperator. K. Here is the gunner's position. Side traverse and elevation gear handles are still in place. L. The commander's ptnce, barely visible are welding marks on the front plate—a hint for the radio set fitted here?



Care for Somua?

WHY CERTAINLY! A SECOND VISIT TO HALF-TRACK LAND WITH DES



All photos by Joe Morgan

Much of the credit for the development of the half-tracked vehicle belongs to Adolphe Kégresse, a Frenchman working for the Russian czar. With the revolution of 1917, M. Kégresse felt no longer welcome in the 'worker's paradise' and returned to his homeland to pursue his innovations. Citroën developed cars with the Kégresse system, and they enjoyed success in cross-country exploration. One of these vehicles made the first vehicular crossing of the Sahara in 1922.

Military use followed, of course, and two companies made half-tracked vehicles for the French Army, Unic (see *MMiR* number 13 for a review of their P107) and Somua. The latter, known to tread heads for their medium tank, produced several variants of the MCG artillery tractor, including the subject of this article, the MCG4. This version was commonly used to tow the munitions caisson for the 155mm gun, and this trailer is also reviewed.

The Kits

The two kits are all resin, except for some short bits of wire, some aluminum tube, and a clear sheet

of styrene for the windshield and cab back window. Careful cleanup is required, as the casting blocks sometimes infringe on the subject matter. Almost all parts have fine flash, easily cleaned away with the knife. While the trailer kit provides a parts diagram with numbers, the tractor has none, although numbers are referred to in regard to parts.

Instructions are adequate, although careful study of the photos and the color photo on the box is sometimes required. The translations may require some thought, as in 'front cross bar' meaning the front axle (but then my French is none too good either). No decals are provided, and neither are color schemes.

Construction: Tractor

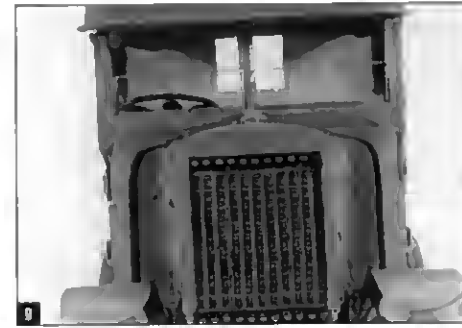
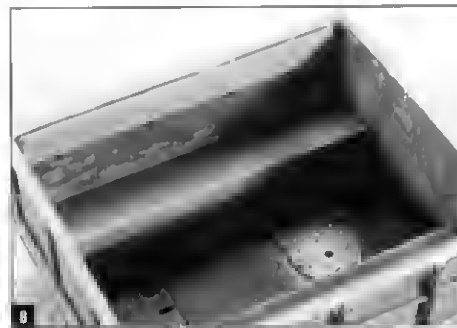
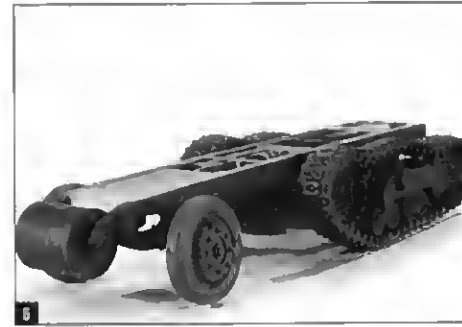
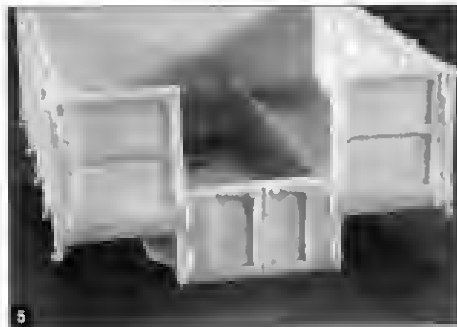
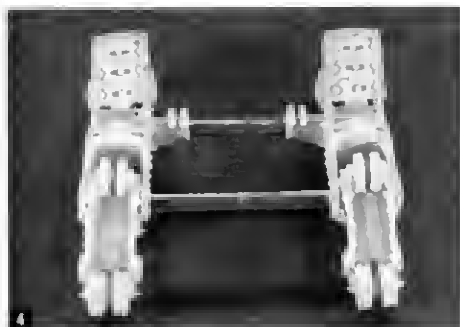
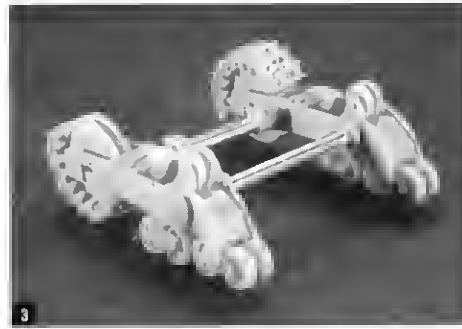
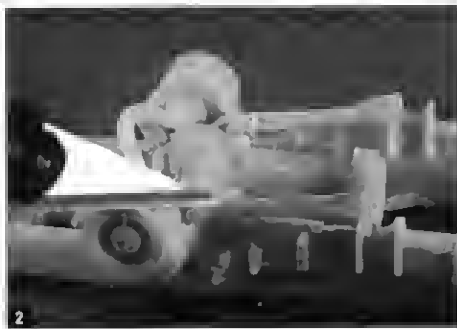
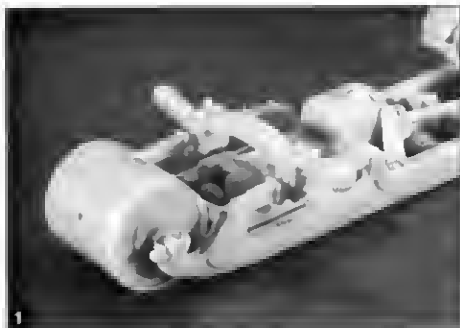
Step 'A', the chassis assembly, is fairly straightforward, with the exception of the 'protective bar' and the shock absorber levers. These are not well described as to positioning, so careful dry fitting is necessary. The bar, shown on the plans to fit vertically, actually goes at a 45° angle toward the front. The levers go from the drive axle mount to the bogie mount.

Don't put the muffler on; paint the chassis first. The front wheels fit the front axle by a cup and

ball system, the cup on the wheels and the ball at the end of the axle. This allows the placement of the wheels at an angle, adding some character.

Step 'B', the bogie assembly, gets complicated. DES' basic idea here is good; the two aluminum tubes joining the two halves of the bogie works quite well. Things begin to get ugly with the mounting of the rear idler. The plates (part 11) that are supposed to locate these parts are OK, but the pins are really flimsy, 'cause they're about ten sizes too small to fit the axle openings in the wheels. This will cause major difficulties when you try to put the tracks on, since the idlers wobble around like a rummy on a ten day bender. And while the slots in the arms (part 10) promise you some fore and aft movement of the idlers, there's actually none. The wheel contacts the crossbar in the arm.

Here's what you should do, and what I'll do when I build the -5 version. Drill the idlers for a metal axle; it'll be hefty, .060 or so. Slide the axle through the slot and through the idler. Glue it (solidly) in place. Cut the miserable little pins that are supposed to do this job off parts 11, and glue the flat plates with the nicely molded bolt on the arms so as to cover the metal axles.



1. The front of the chassis, with the anti ditching roller and front axle attached. 2. The blade points to the shock absorber levers; right above the blade is the 'protective bar' at the 45° angle. 3, 4. Rear suspension assembly; note the metal tubes running between the two halves. 5. The tractor bed; the door in the center must

be removed and replaced with one that is full length. 6. The ramplated chassis, sprayed flat black. 7. Cab interior, with driver controls in place. 8. The bed with seats installed and new rear door in place. 9. The completed cab with the nice casting on the radiator. The two piece windshield can be seen here.

Otherwise you'll find out like I did, that there's just too many moving parts to get the tracks on and flat, which happens in step 'C'. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the tracks are perhaps the worst fit that I've seen yet in a resin kit. The guide horns are too long to fit between the bogie wheels, and the bogie wheels are too wide to fit between the outside guides. This, combined with the idlers flopping around like a headless chicken (and finally breaking free completely), the bogies wiggling up and down, the whole assembly moving up and down 'cause you can't glue it to the chassis until the tracks are on, produced some remarkably bad language, even from me.

The whole idea here is to get the bottom run of track flat on the ground, I guess, but it was a miserable failure.

Since the drive sprockets are fixed, the whole articulated idea here is a sham. So here's what needs to be done. Test fit the track. As an unashamed Francophile and lover of French resin kits, I had faith in these guys that the track would fit the bogies. Bad mistake, and made worse by discovering it while trying to fit the bogie assembly. Using my fix on the idler, situate it so the bottom shoe on the track molded to the idler is on the ground. Take a piece of suitably trimmed track, place it under the bogie wheels, and glue the bogie in place. Now you've got something solid to work on, without a whole bunch of moving parts. Fit the

tracks (you'll probably have to trim off a shoe on each long run). By using heat, sag can be achieved as needed.

The completed chassis was then sprayed flat black, a common practice in the French Army of the time. Since DES didn't furnish any color info, I went ahead with this to give me some color scheme, other than solid olive.

After the above mess, the rest of the building went well, and was quite easy. Step 'D' concerns the rear body. The only weird thing here is having to razor saw the existing door from the body and replace it with part 51. The "police plate" is, of course, the rear license plate with the taillight. There's an option given here; to glue the windlass roller in the bed, or the seats. I guess this is either/or, but I would think the seats should be in regardless. Doesn't really matter, though, because when the bed cover is on, the inside is barely visible.

Step 'E' is the cab assembly. You're going to have to do a lot of pre-painting here, as the open cab makes it impossible to build, mask and spray. I used Pactra artillery olive for the inside, just to give some distinction from the exterior color. The pedals, levers, and steering wheel and column were painted black. Instrument dials were painted white. The seats were done in Polly S khaki (as were the seats in the cargo bed).

The canvas roof and the bed cover, really nicely cast as to texture, were painted Pactra Africa

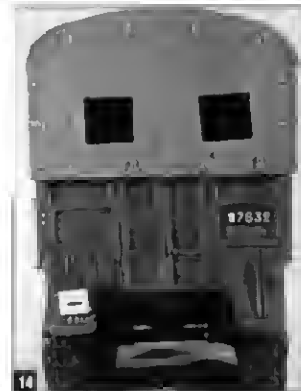
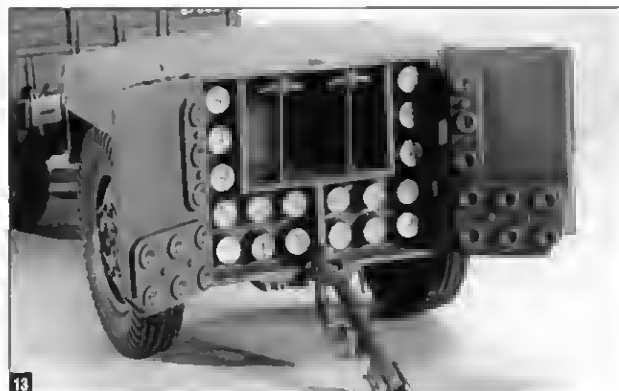
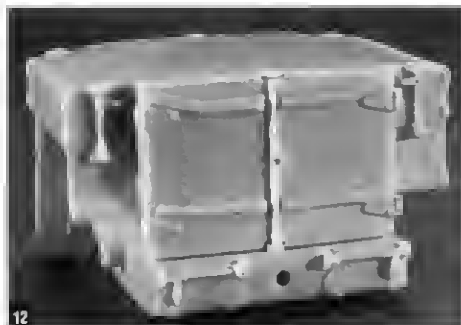
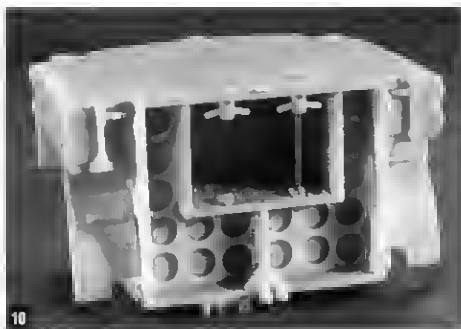
yellow, while the rolled up side curtains were done in dark tan.

The main reason all this has to be pre-painted is the clear parts. When I first looked at the plans, I figured I'd cut one piece of clear styrene for each side of the windshield, then scribe a line down the middle to show two parts. Wrong. The mounting ribs in part 24 are staggered, just like the real thing, so you've gotta cut four parts. Not a big deal, though; just put the styrene on the furnished templates, cut and snap. Some minor sanding will give you a good fit. And you could actually tilt the top portion open, if you wanted to fabricate some hardware.

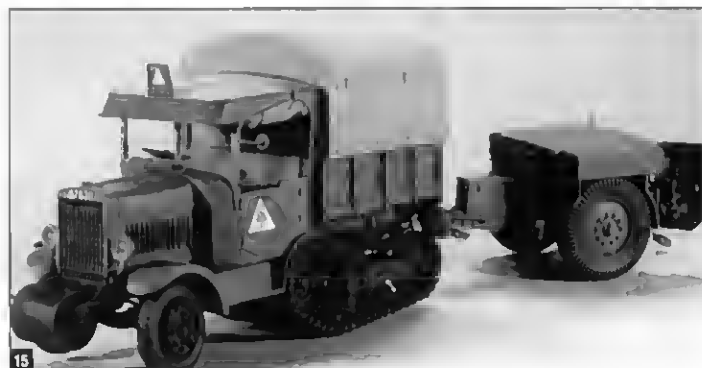
Fitting part 24 to part 25 required some minor trimming and a bit of putty. The hood/radiator unit was a good fit. (Check out the nice casting on the radiator.) The doors needed a bit of work to fit, and one hinge was broken off one. I replaced it with sprue. The 'control box' they're talking about is the steering box and arm. This should be painted black like the rest of the chassis. Test fit and trim the arm to fit to the front axle; just where is up to you, as the plans give you no clue.

Now all the little stuff can go on, the tow hooks, the rear plate (part 42), the towing signal on the cab roof after painting, and the headlights. These need to have round bits of clear styrene cut for the lenses. I painted the inside Polly S bright silver, then added the lenses with white glue.

The bottom of the light mounts need to be heavily



10. The two halves of the trailer joined; the 'fastenings' have been installed in the powder charge locker, and one wire stay has been added. 11. The pins to fit the fenders didn't quite line up, so the bottom opening was made into a slot. Note the hefty axle. 12. The front doors were closed, as the trailer is to be permanently hooked up to the tractor. 13. Completed trailer, with shell bottoms in, and rear doors in place. The rear stand, folded up for towing, is let down. 14. This shot emphasizes the height of the tractor; it's a tall thing. 15. Completed tractor and trailer.



put the hubs and wheels on until after painting.

There are optional directions for building the caisson in travel or operational positions. Since I wanted to hook my trailer to the half-track, I did a mix. I closed the front doors and opened the back ones. So the back end got a bunch of shell bottoms in the open compartment. After all the parts go on the front doors and they are glued on, the tongue can be added.

And a bunch of parts go on the doors. These consist of the heavy locks, parts 26, called 'bolts' in the plans. To add to the confusion, parts 25 that go on the front of the trailer are also identified as 'bolts'. Obviously, some nut did this.

These locks also get two 'tappets', parts 19, which are "T" shaped handles; the other 'bolts', parts 25, get one 'tappet' each. The 'tappets' must be cut to length, 3mm.

The front stand was attached in the towing position (up), and the rear stand, which when towing was folded up, was let down. The large box, part 30, was glued to the tongue, after the two wire rods with pivots, parts 29, were attached to the sides of the tongue. In the plans, you're instructed to attach the two 'tightenings', parts 32, to these rods; the 'tightenings' are handles, which are drilled to

accept the rods. This is in the towing position; in the unloading position, you're instructed to, "String the two tightenings (32) in (M3)," whatever the hell that means. The tongue also gets a pair of handles at the front, made from wire.

Anyway, the trailer was a quick and easy build, with good fit and admirable detail. It also was painted the same French olive as the tractor. The tractor got a pair of playing card symbols on the doors, and serial numbers ("matricules") at front and rear. These are on a black background, prefaced by a tricolor; the color photo showed a five digit number starting with a seven. I had a set to match, but only four numbers would fit in the spaces they had to go, so one number was cut off.

I have no idea what the license plates should look like, so I put a blank on the tractor (and you can't see the trailer one with the doors open anyway).

Conclusion

Another nice kit from this manufacturer, marred by the terrible track fit and weird suspension instructions. At least now you'll be able to avoid the pitfalls. Of course, now I need their kit of the gun and the -5 tractor! ☹️

—Joe Morgan

sanded to fit the slots at the back of the radiator; I guess they go there, as the instructions are, again, none too clear on placement. The towing or trailer signal was painted the base color, a mixed French olive, and then the yellow triangles added from decals from my spares (they were cut from those weird lightning bolts Tamiya provides for Japanese tanks).

The Caisson

This big trailer is an easy build. Just be careful of the parts, as the translations are (again) none too clear. For example, step A, "body mounting," is about putting the two halves of the trailer together, but mostly about the internal and external small parts.

The four 'fastenings', parts 10, go on the inside top of the open locker in the middle of part 1. The four 'fastenings', part 11, are little oyster shaped things with a slot in them to accept wire stays that go from (you guessed it) parts 10 to 11. The plans say these are 14mm, but I had to shorten mine a bit. Cut yours at 13mm; there's plenty of wire if one is too short. These lockers are for, I believe, bagged powder charges. The French 155mm gun obviously used separate charges and projectiles. Strangely enough, no powder charges are provided, although plenty of shells are (or at least the bottoms of 'em.)

Anyway, after you get the 'fastenings' and the metal rods in, glue the upper and lower halves of the trailer together. Just a bit of cleanup is needed here; the fit is quite good.

What is called the 'shaft' is the trailer tongue. Since it conflicted with the doors, I saved this 'till later. Go ahead and do the rest of step A, including the mudguards (fenders) and tow hooks, but don't

MMIR RECCE

DES Kits Somua MCG4 (1930/45) half-track. Kit number 35060. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price 400 ff or around sixty dollars. U.S. retail may be higher.

DES Kits 155mm Munitions Trailer. Kit number 35045. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price 250 ff or around thirty-five dollars. U.S. retail may be higher.

References

L'Automobile Sous L'Uniforme 1939-40 Editions Ch. Massin, by Francois Vauvillier & Jean-Michel Touraine, 1992, ISBN 2-70720-197-9. A complete French text photo guide to all pre-war French military vehicles.

Scout-Cars & Half-Tracks by J.M. Boniface and J.G. Jeudy, E/P/A Editions, 1989, ISBN 2-85120-316-9. Another French text book, with only a brief look at our friend.

Raupenschlepper Baby!

NEW HELP FOR AN OLD FRIEND AND AN AIRES 10.5cm, TOO



The Steyr RSO was developed in response to the German army's need for a fully tracked truck for use on the Russian front (the mud was deep, you see). The Austrian company Steyr produced this little wonder. This was the same company that produced the well-known 1500A heavy car and the RSO shared several components with its wheeled cousin, such as the engine, clutch and gear box.

The workhorse of the German army during the second half of World War II, it has always been one of my favorite tracked subjects. Its small size and odd looks always appealed to me.

The little 10.5cm gun is also highly appealing to me, so it seemed to be a great combination.

Inspiration for this model came from a photograph found in *Ground Power* magazine which shows a column of RSO's towing 10.5 howitzers. The captions are in Japanese, which I do not speak, so the exact location and unit was not discernible. However, studying the photo closely, I spotted civilians wearing fez hats, which I believe would

place it somewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean.

About the hardware

The RSO kit goes back quite a way. Originally produced by Pecrless Max, it has been produced by Italeri since it acquired the molds well over 20 years ago. Just recently, Italeri has added two additional variants of this kit, releasing it as an open cab version with cargo bed mounted PAK 40 and a square cab-over version towing a PAK 40 gun.

Although dated by today's high kit standards, it still stands up as a relatively good one. The molding on the kit is very good and except for a few pin marks, it builds into a fine rendition of the vehicle. Luckily for me, after market companies have seen fit to give this kit additional life and to bring it closer to today's standards. I used some of these to improve my RSO.

Friulmodellismo's set of white metal link-to-link tracks was used to improve on the kit's vinyl tracks. The Friul tracks are of their earlier style, in which a jig is employed to bend integral tabs to lock into the next link's molded-on pin. They are beauti-



fully molded, requiring no clean-up. Spare links are always included, so you will not be caught short.

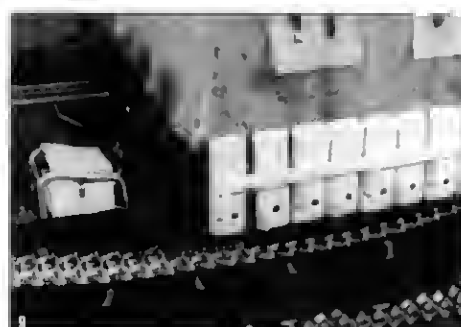
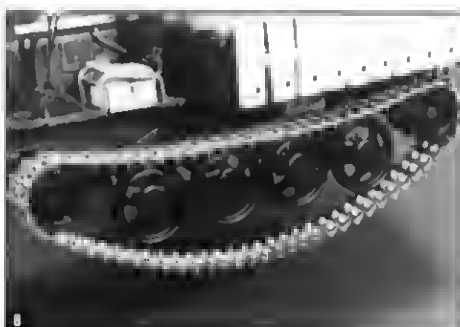
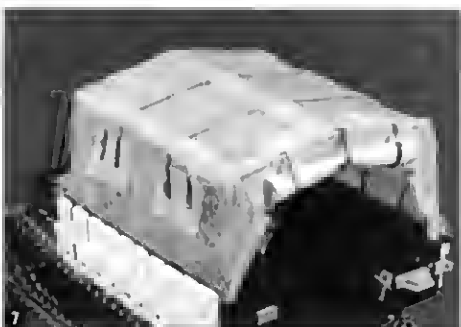
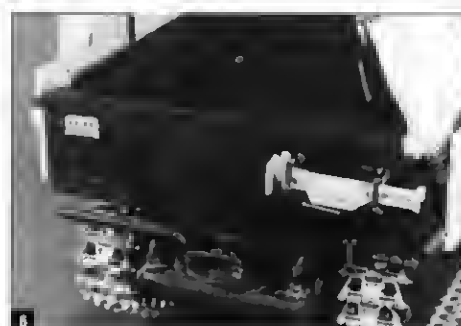
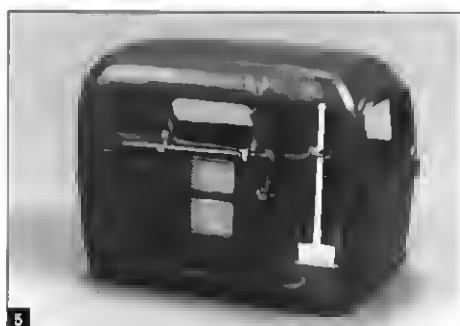
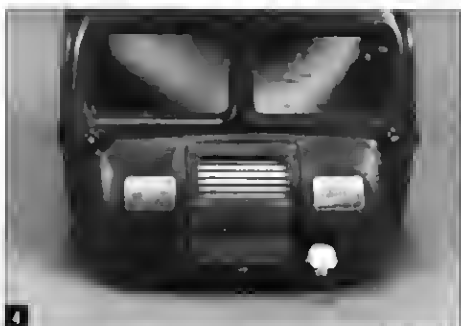
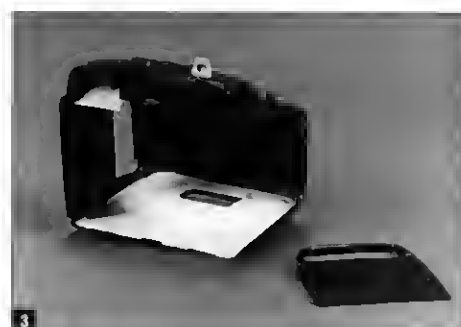
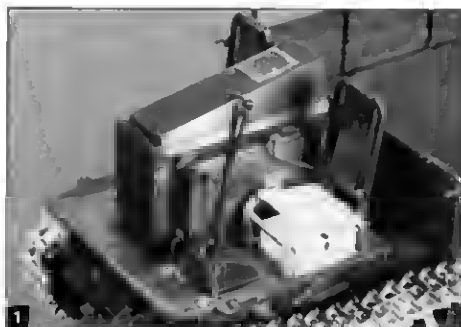
I love Friul's tracks because they are white metal and they capture the look, feel and characteristic sag of the real tracks faithfully. I am always especially impressed by the fact that they require little or no clean up. ModelKasten has also recently released a set of workable tracks for the RSO in styrene.

The second kit used is the beautiful Aires Hobby Models le FH-18/40/1943 10.5 cm light field howitzer.

This is not my first try with Aires kits. I was also highly impressed with this model. It's a mixed media affair, consisting of resin, photo-etch, a turned aluminum barrel and various size metal rods. The resin parts in my kit were very sharp, well detailed and cast with no air bubbles. Clean up is minimal.

Wrangling the RSO

Basic construction of the kit was a no-brainer.



1, 2. This is the interior with all the Eduard parts installed and my scratch built seats. 3. The back cab wall was replaced with styrene due to some nasty sink marks. 4. The front end is pleasantly dressed up with several Eduard parts and a new Tamiya Norek light. 5. Ditto on the back end. The shore light

Tamiya, too. 6. The back of the bed also got a few Tamiya parts. 7. The tarp was fashioned from tissue wrapping paper and white glue. Straps for the windows were made from foil. 8. Why I love Friul tracks! 9. The styrene grousers installed on the bed.

The real work here was in the detailing. The tractor was detailed as follows.

The Eduard photo-etched sheet for the RSO is composed of mostly interior detail. Because this area of the kit is weak, I felt compelled to add it all, although admittedly it's all hard to see. I know it's there.

One of the most inaccurate areas of the kit was the seats. They are represented by large squares with corresponding back panels. They were cut out and replaced with seat frames made out of wire with cushions fashioned from epoxy putty. The kit's seat backs were retained. Storage boxes for under the seats were made out of plastic card following my references, the W&T magazine being the most useful for this area.

There are several small screens to add to the engine cover and two brackets for the sides. These are some of the more visible parts and they are also some of the nicest in the set.

Additional parts were added to the inside of the cab, like the driver's and passenger's lower kick panels and two pedals (clutch and brake?) for the driver.

There were several significant sink holes in the inside back of the cab, so I added a large sheet of styrene to cover the entire back of the cab. This is a bit quicker.

The exterior of the cab gets several more of the excellent Eduard parts. The large front vent and its attendant covers really sets off the front end, as do the small square vents which get added to the back.

Brackets and clasps are provided for the two tools for the back of the cab and I replaced the shovel with one from the Tamiya Panzer IV tool set. I also added the Norek light and the rear black-out light from the same set.

The final touch for the cab was the addition of two windshield wipers.

Eduard supplies a beautifully executed box for installation underneath the left side of the cargo bed. I don't know what this was originally for, but it looks a lot better than the kit part.

The final brass details are the two reflectors and the jack bracket on the rear of the cargo bed. Again, the jack came from the Tamiya tool set.

The tarp was fashioned out of tissue paper with the standard treatment of thinned-out white glue. I used wrapping tissue and not the kind you blow your nose with (it's too delicate). I divided the tarp into sections, then cut them out and carefully tacked them onto the kit's bows (which are surprisingly thin) beginning with the large center section. The last parts added were the side panels and the rolled back flap. Straps for these pieces were formed with lead foil.

To be able to tow the gun, the towing pintle provided in the kit had to be redone. I scrounged one from an Italeri Opel Blitz truck.

I formed the Friul tracks in two continuous sections, using the kit's vinyl tracks as a guide for length. I test fitted the track until I got the desired

look. I left the front sprocket unglued, which helps in the removing of the tracks for painting and weathering.

This older Friul system will sometimes sag and come apart, but mine have, so far, not bugged.

The most laborious items to fashion were the snow shoes or grousers. Consulting my references, I formed two complete sets from strip plastic. A complete set appears to be either ten or eleven shoes for each side. The rounded contours were created by careful sanding. Much to my surprise, the new Italeri RSO/Pak 40 combo kit provides a set of grousers. Oh well.

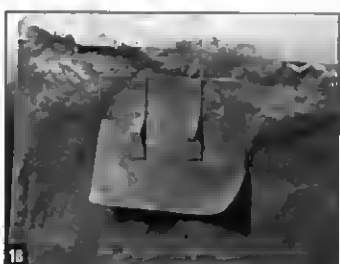
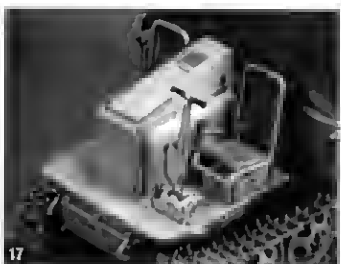
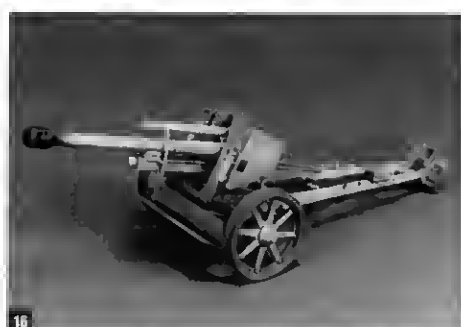
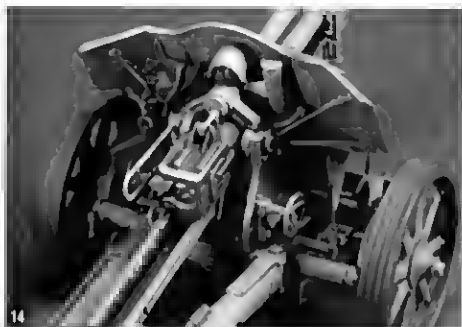
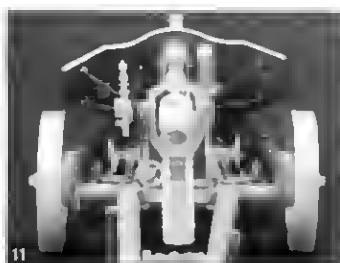
The bit with the bite

Construction of the gun was relatively trouble free. The photo-etched sheet included with the gun is by Eduard (I think) and is up to their usual standards. A nine step instruction sheet is provided, which was not very clear on a few things. For example, it indicates how to attach the wheel drums, but fails to point out the attachment of the wheels. This is no big deal, as it is a very straight forward affair.

Bending of the gun shield was rather tricky. Plan to consult your references on this one and to test fit often as the attachment of the support brackets to the gun shield was vague and the gun shield itself did not have any locating marks on it.

I was impressed with the execution of the etched shield, however. The rivets are highly realistic looking.

(continued on page 34)



10. The front end of the Aires 10.5cm gun. I was quite impressed with the rivet detail on the shield. 11. The detail of the breech end of the gun is convincing. 12. The oddly designed muzzle brake and its photo-etched "fins." 13. The finished gun prior to painting. 14. The painted and weathered breech area of the gun. 15. I fixed the trails permanently to the gun, but it is possible to leave them workable. 16. An overall shot of the finished gun. 17. The finished

tractor's cab interior. I built the model so the cab could be removed. 18. One of the finished window side flaps. 19. The completed back end. The decals are from the kit. The back flap was also formed from tissue and the straps from lead foil. 20. The left side grouser set. They were entirely formed from scratch using thick styrene sheet. Unfortunately, the new RSO/Pak 40 combo kit from Italeri provides a full set. Oh well...

The guard rail for the breech block is a photo-etched part and therefore flat. The actual part is tubular, so I scrounged one from an old Pak 40 kit. I also added a scrounged pick-ax for the front of the shield.

The later style muzzle brake had rather pronounced flaps. These are also photo-etched pieces, which get added to the resin muzzle brake.

A few of the photos I found show the 10.5 being pulled along with a small limber. Since the photos were not clear enough to scratch build this piece and since no kit exists of it, I opted for no limber. The above mentioned "fez photo" shows the gun being hauled without a limber.

Painting & finishing touches

Referring back to the photograph in *Ground Power* magazine, it was apparent to me that the vehicles were painted in German dark yellow with dark gray or field gray canvas covers.

Appropriately, I gave my model an overall coat of Testor's Model Master German yellow, followed by an over spray of the base color lightened up with a bit of white. The canvas was painted with Floquil's German Field Gray. I also sprayed a mixture of brown and black along the bottom for depth.

The kit's decal sheet was the source of the transportation marking on the left door and the registration panel on the back of the cargo bed. These were applied over gloss using Micro Set.

For weathering, I sealed the base colors and decals with a coat of flat and used washes of black and burnt umber artists oils, followed by drybrushing with lighter shades of the base paint.

To replicate worn spots, I lightly dry-brushed

gun metal and dark brown.

Before adding the windshield wipers, I cut small masking tape pieces for the windshield glass and lightly sprayed on a light gray "haze." This represents the area cleaned by the wipers.

The tracks were painted with Floquil's Rail Brown and washed with black artist's oils. The worn metal look on the tracks and guide teeth was replicated by lightly rubbing with SnJ Spray

Metal Polishing Powder.

Conclusion

The combination of the RSO towing the field gun makes for a very attractive and interesting model of a very much used and neglected vehicle. I am looking forward to building the other Italeri RSO subjects to create a mini collection.

—José Ramos

MMIR RECCE

Italeri Steyr RSO/1. Kit number 0227. Suggested retail price \$22.00

Aires Hobby Models: le FH - 18/40/1943 German 10.5 cm Light Field Howitzer. Kit number 3009. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price \$49.00.

Eduard Steyr RSO/1 Detail Set. Kit number 35112. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price \$14.00.

References

AFV G2, Volume 6 Number 3, Vehicle Close-up: The German Raupenschlepper "Ost," by Gary Simpson.

AFV G2, Volume 5 Number 8 March/April 1976 German Raupenschlepper "Ost," by James Steuard. These two are long gone, but they did provide useful background information and a few photos. Look for them at swap meets.

Wheels & Tracks, Number 27, Raupenschlepper Ost - The Steyr 470 alias RSO/01 Tracked Tractor of the East. Excellent article containing the full story of the vehicle and several good photos with some from the tech manual. All of the W&T issues are in print.

Ground Power No.004, 1994-9, W.W.II German Military Vehicles 2: Ground Power No.021, 1996-2, W.W.II German Military Vehicles 2. Excellent photos.

Die Rad-Und Volketten - Zugmaschinen - Des Deutschen Heeres 1871 - 1945 by Walter J. Spielberger. Motor Buch Verlag. "The" definitive reference for German armor enthusiasts. Good coverage of the series. German text

German Light Field Artillery 1935-1945 by Joachim Engelmann, Schiffer Military Aviation History. Excellent reference on the 10.5cm gun showing all the types in action.

It has arrived!

GET ON BACK, IT'S A DRAGON WAGON IN STYRENE

Think about it: Tamiya did a Dragon Wagon. No really. Seriously give this some thought. Think about it from the point of view that it is the type of thing we thought we simply would never see in plastic, much less from Tamiya. I remember a game my modeling buddies and I used to play. We'd all sit around and say what kit we'd like to see done in plastic. Beer usually played an important factor in these conversations and generally the more beer we'd consume, the more outlandish the suggestions would become. Invariably

naked and screaming into the streets. I did (well, that may be a slight exaggeration).

I don't care if you like Allied, German or Malaysian, you're gonna want this kit. There are just so many possibilities.

A word of warning. If you are the type that is sickened by the lavish distribution of superlatives on a Tamiya kit, you'd best just skip this article, cuz' WE ARE GOIN' TO TOWN BABY!

Everything you always wanted to know...

Those of you who are looking for an exhaustive description of the development of the DW are politely referred to MMiR issue 17, in which I

Beneath the trailer parts is a long box which contains all the goodies that are not straight plastic, like the tires (take a whiff, smells like Sears), the brass and the other metal bits and pieces.

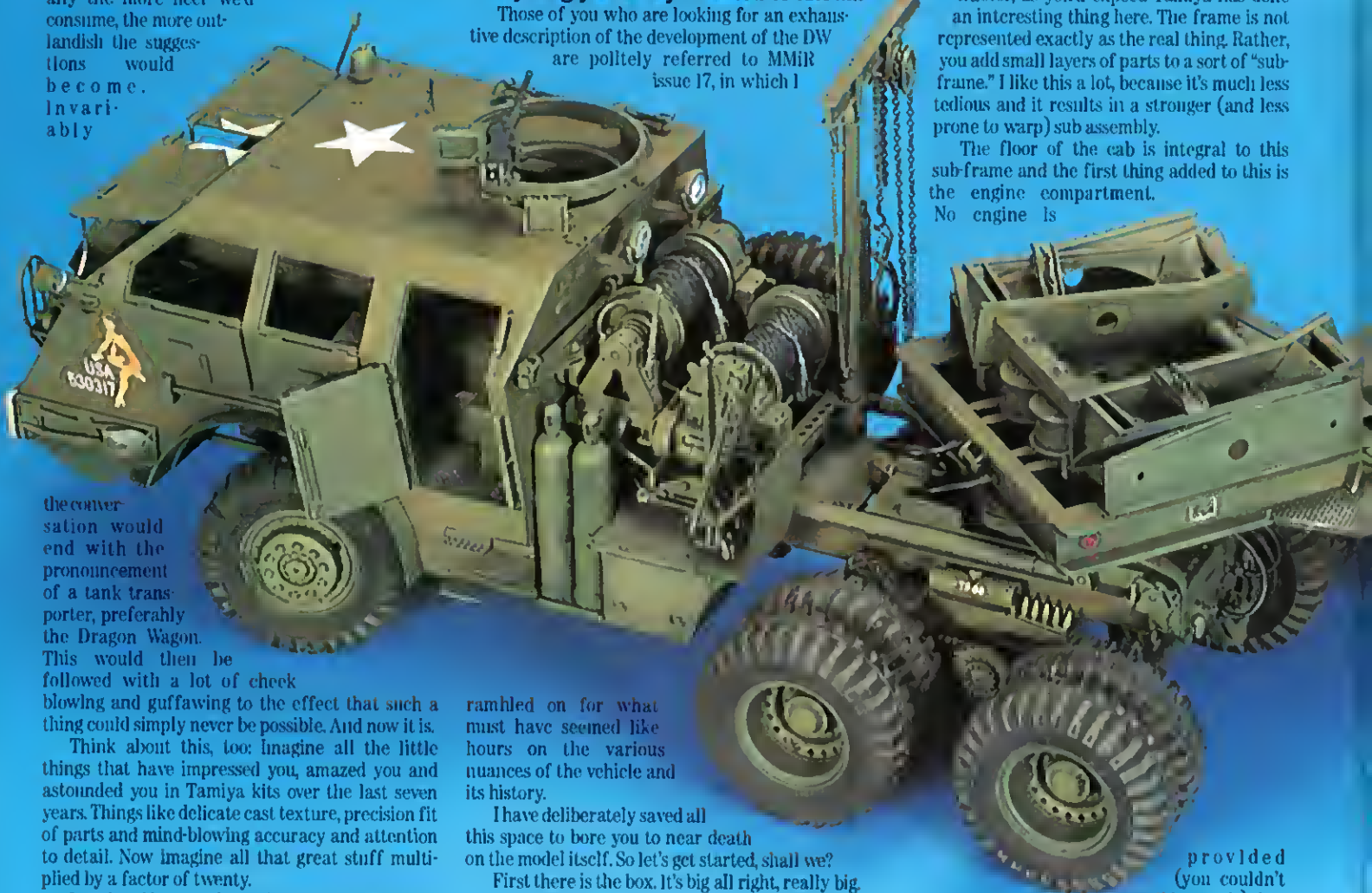
Rummaging through the remaining sprues, it seems like the kit will never be done, but remember: it's Tamiya. We're in good hands.

Chapter one: I am born

Construction starts with the frame of the tractor, as you'd expect. Tamiya has done an interesting thing here. The frame is not represented exactly as the real thing. Rather, you add small layers of parts to a sort of "sub-frame." I like this a lot, because it's much less tedious and it results in a stronger (and less prone to warp) sub assembly.

The floor of the cab is integral to this sub-frame and the first thing added to this is the engine compartment.

No engine is



the conversation would end with the pronouncement of a tank transporter, preferably the Dragon Wagon.

This would then be followed with a lot of cheek blowing and guffawing to the effect that such a thing could simply never be possible. And now it is.

Think about this, too: Imagine all the little things that have impressed you, amazed you and astounded you in Tamiya kits over the last seven years. Things like delicate cast texture, precision fit of parts and mind-blowing accuracy and attention to detail. Now imagine all that great stuff multiplied by a factor of twenty.

Imagine, if you will, a 1/35th scale plastic kit containing over six-hundred parts on 20 different sprues, two large sheets of photo-etch, real rubber tires, pre-bent and pre-cut metal rod, pre-cut brass tubing, vinyl tubing, copper chain, copper wire, nylon string, metal reinforcing parts, clear parts (with chrome bezels), a 4 x 5 inch decal sheet, and a twenty-eight page instruction and demonstration booklet. Got it?

Now open your eyes—it's here.

Get excited. Get very excited. As a matter of fact, get so excited that you run out of your house

rambled on for what must have seemed like hours on the various nuances of the vehicle and its history.

I have deliberately saved all this space to bore you to near death on the model itself. So let's get started, shall we?

First there is the box. It's big all right, really big. The box is the biggest I have ever seen for a Tamiya kit, measuring a hefty 19 x 12 and 3.5 inches thick.

The box top is adorned with the typically awesome Tamiya artwork. An M4 Sherman is "ghosted" onto the back end to give you some inspiration.

After opening the box and recovering from the momentary rush of blood to the brain, I was pleased to see it neatly divided up into sections. Two of these contain the one-piece cab and the trailer sections. These latter items are on a sprue, but it might be more correct to say that the sprue is on them, it being so insignificant in relation to the part.

provided (you couldn't possibly see it), but they do include the large radiator and cooling fan. The fan is completely invisible. I got a kick out of the fact that this was added for pretty much no reason. The radiator cap does stick up through the top of the engine compartment, so be sure to clean it up carefully.

I was also impressed with the transmission control trunk. It has the stick shafts already molded in. The first of many tingly sensations sets in.

More of the various layers follow and this includes the front winch assembly. Tamiya

provides string of the nylon type for all the winches. I used thin superglue to secure the string, just a drop or two to keep the wound pattern intact.

Beautiful collet heads are provided, but they have that annoying little notch in the end for the string. This is next to impossible to disguise, so I always plug them with styrene and later drill them out to receive the string ends.

Back up front, a gorgeous power steering mechanism gets added (also completely invisible later on) as do the air cleaner cans.

The balance of construction is pretty much suspension from this point. Tamiya gives us more of that one-piece philosophy with various shafts and joints mating together to form even more various subassemblies.

I am constantly amazed that these parts not only fit together with great precision, but that they also fit together perfectly with other subassemblies and these in turn fit perfectly onto the frame itself. It's a beautiful thing, man.

The rear tandem axle unit can still be a bit tricky, even with the Big T's superb instructions. This is also where most resin builders were stymied. Just remember that the two axle beam assemblies are identical (Tamiya has given us great cast on foundry numbers here).

When adding both these assemblies to the rear trans axle, it's a good idea not to glue the angled support beams (part H39) until after the whole subassembly is dry—or not at all. These cause the assembly to rack a little. I let the whole shebang dry

later on). Each is terrifically molded, they represent the Firestone pattern and the fit to the rims is magical. They are hollow and their one downside is that they each have a seam running all the way around. To remove this you'll have to wedge your finger right inside to flatten the tire, then wail away with medium grit sand paper or an emery board. The seam is not all that anxious to come off and removing all nineteen is a real bitch. I rather unashamedly left all of mine right where they were.

The truly great thing about the rubber tires is that the model can be completely painted and weathered before they are added. No more hours of tire painting!

If you are lamenting the inability to impart a bulging effect on these tires by flattening them, take heart. Dragon Wagon tires do not bulge. Case in point: the Dragon Wagon named "Dry Run" on page two of the instruction sheet. It is hauling no less than a Panther on non-bulging tires. That having been said, they are sufficiently soft that they flatten slightly at the point of contact, without bulging.

Although I was intending to leave them off for painting, I couldn't resist mounting all the wheels temporarily just to see what they looked like on.

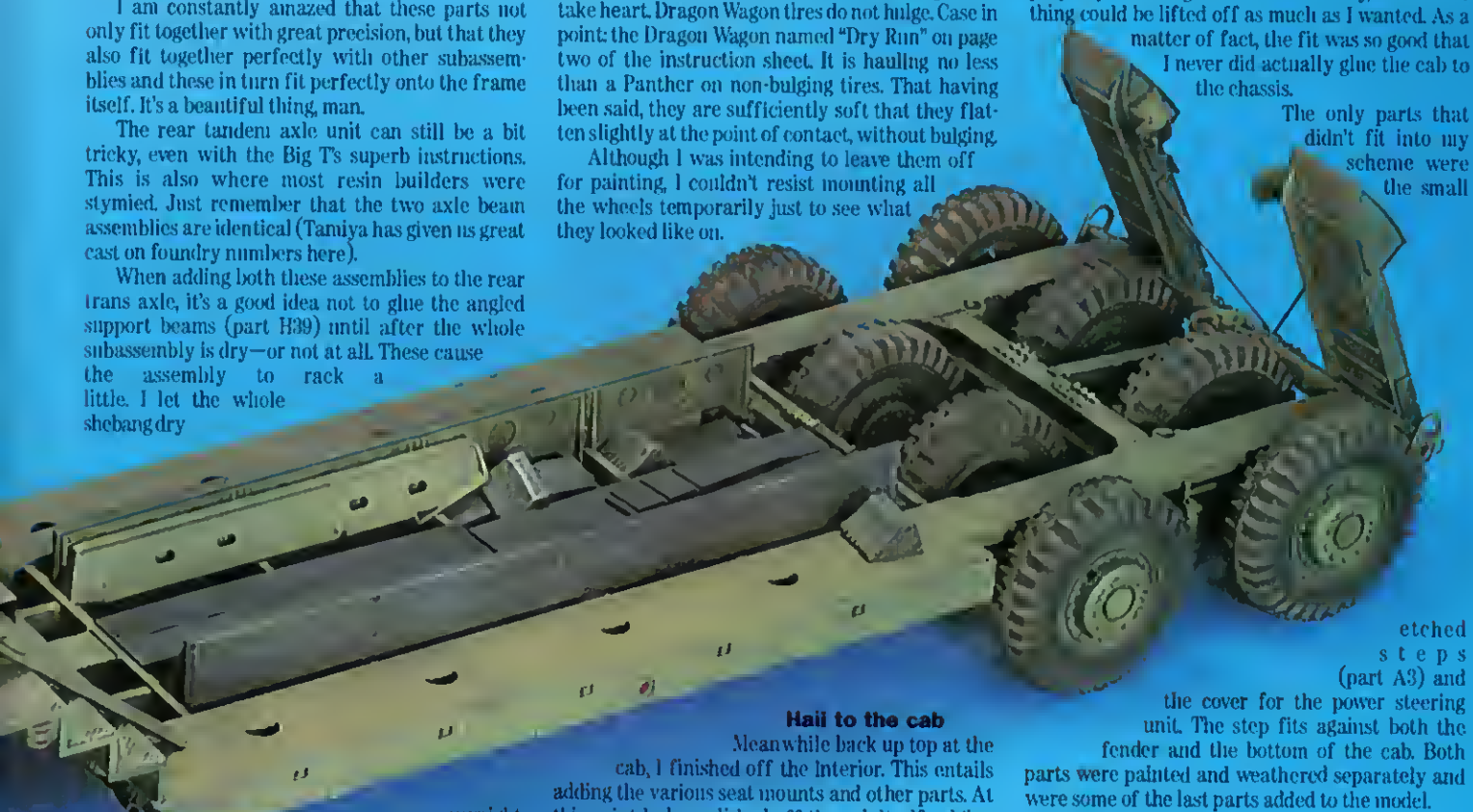
was accomplished with OD over a black base, a light wash (it's the interior after all) with dark brown.

Prior to this, the decals were added over a coat of gloss. Although I was going for a complete out-of-the-box theme, I couldn't resist adding some of the H&A "US" decals to the canteens and the more accurate U.S. Jerry can from the Tamiya M4 (it has a cap). I felt much better afterwards.

Although I intended to leave the cab off for painting, I was still a bit perplexed as to how to go about completing the chassis without it. I didn't want too many parts to paint and weather later. Rather than attaching the bottom panels to the cab (parts C8 and C20), I attached them to the chassis. I then dry fit the cab over them to ensure their proper positioning. When all was dry, the whole thing could be lifted off as much as I wanted. As a matter of fact, the fit was so good that

I never did actually glue the cab to the chassis.

The only parts that didn't fit into my scheme were the small



etched steps (part A3) and

the cover for the power steering unit. The step fits against both the fender and the bottom of the cab. Both parts were painted and weathered separately and were some of the last parts added to the model.

Onward and upward

Detailing the cab exterior is a ton of fun. Once again, all the various gear is present, accurate and very well done. Highlights include the draw har for the cab front, the side tool racks and the tripod for the 50 cal. This last item almost gets lost and it's a beauty.

That draw har will actually function, even though it stows away. Cool little pins are provided to attach it to the front. These are also provided for the "whiffle-tree" towing har that is mounted on the back of the cab. Think of the diorama possibilities. Hmmm...

As you'd expect, there's a full set of armored shutters and they can be installed open or closed. The front support rods are another finely done item. Each of the shutters has a good sized knock-out mark, so they will have to be dealt with if you leave the shutters open. I would rather have had them on the outside. Don't bother with the front ones, they can't be seen.

The top of the cab is adorned with that ultra-spiff 50 cal and ring mount we first saw with the M3 Greyhound. This is now available as a separate item in one of the Tamiya truck accessory sets. Even the teeny barrel clamp is included. I call that love.

Hail to the cab

Meanwhile back up top at the cab, I finished off the interior. This entails adding the various seat mounts and other parts. At this point I also polished off the cab itself, adding all the braces, roof panels, etc., to the impressive one-piece assembly.

The entire cab is a single piece minus the back. This is also a single piece and those of us that don't particularly enjoy messing with brass rod will rejoice at the grab handles molded into the back panel.

Tamiya provides 4 spiffy crew figures and the driver must be added before the steering wheel to get it all to look right. Tamiya even provides little magazine cut-outs in the instructions for one of the dudes to read.

Continuing the recent theme of providing the many little placards seen on U.S. vehicles, the T-sters weigh in with all the labels for the inner cab components, like the fire extinguishers (truly awesome), the decontamination units (a gas warfare hold over), the grenade and flare boxes, and the first aid kits.

All the interior gear is as you'd expect. Accurate and superbly rendered. They have even included the chain oil can, spare 50 cal barrel and a cool little canvas bagged Thompson sub-machine gun.

Because it would be hard to get to later (and to be able to install the windshield glass last), I decided to paint and weather the cab interior now. This

overnight on a hard surface.

Oh—one other thing. Since the axle beams are identical, they both contain location marks for the right side chain guard (part B6). These should be removed on the left side because the guard on that side is on the opposite end.

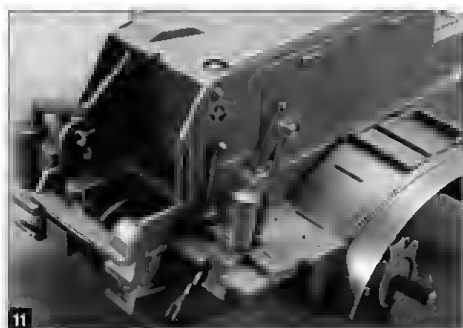
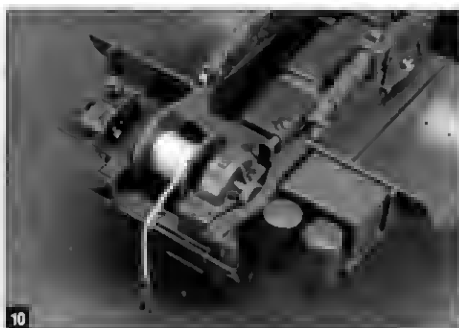
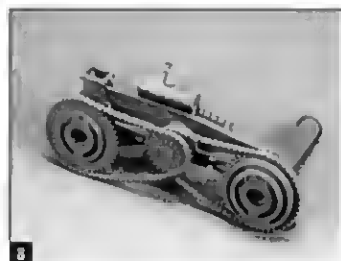
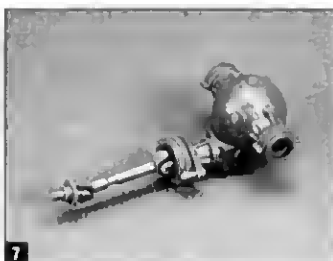
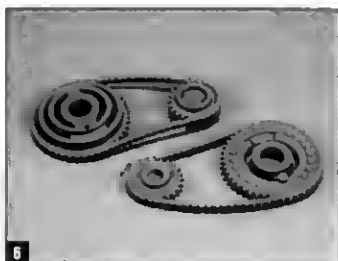
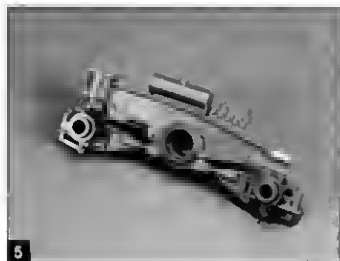
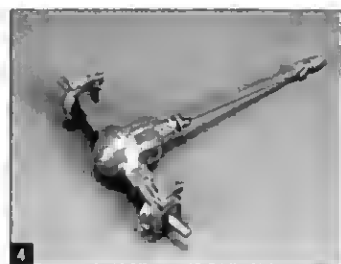
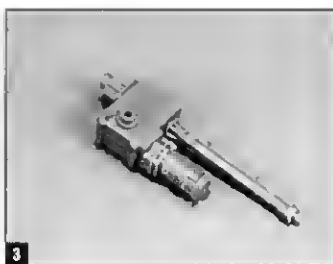
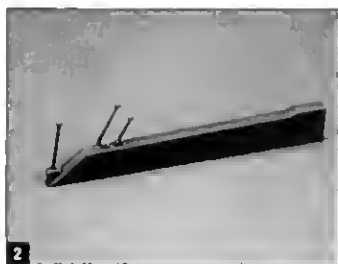
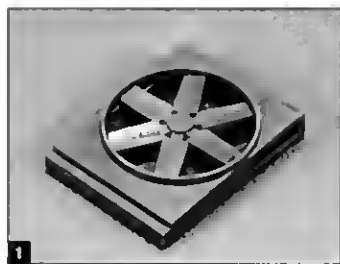
Yet another nice feature is the poly caps that get added to the inside of the rear trans axle. This allows it to swivel up and down like the real deal. I also found out later that this greatly contributes to all the tires sitting dead flat.

To finish up the undercarriage, the front axle and rear tandem axle drop right on the chassis and that's that.

Getting Tired

In Tamiya's assembly sequence the wheels and tires go next. The wheels are pretty basic, although they are very accurate. Each of the rear wheels gets a big brake drum and all the many bolts are present on each. Not one, but two poly caps get inserted into each wheel.

One of the most unique features of this is the inclusion of rubber tires. Now, Tamiya is taking a page from its substantial book on model cars (more



1. The soon to be invisible radiator fan housing. You'll know it's there... 2. The transmission control trunk—one single piece, thank you very much. 3. More secrets... the disappearing power steering mechanism. 4. The front trans axle. The wheels will turn, a cross rod will eventually link the two sides. 5. One of two identical axle beams for the rear wheels. Note the casting marks towards the rear. 6. The single piece chain drives. 7. The trans

axle for the rear drive train. Poly cnbs on the inside allow the whole assembly to remain workable. This is a big help in getting all the wheels to sit flat. 8. Half of the finished rear drive train with the axles and chains installed. 9. This is the basic chassis assembly—as it comes right off the sprue. 10. The completed front winch. 11. The driver's compartment gets its sticks and stuff.

More etched stuff goes on the back of the cab roof in the form of the retaining brackets for the rear armored shutters. These engage the rods mounted on the inside face of the doors and you can make 'em work if you wish.

Perhaps the most agreeable details on the cab are the head light assemblies. The mounts, housings and guards are dead-on, but what really blows me away are the clear lenses and the chrome bezels. This is another example of Tamiya's model automotive background. The idea is to drop a bezel in each housing and then top it off with a lens.

I went ahead and added the guards to the lights correctly estimating that there would be (barely) enough room later to add the lenses and bezels.

Back! Back I say!

Finishing up the tractor means adding all the good stuff behind the cab. One of the items is the fifth wheel assembly. This is a wonderfully complex little subassembly which will remain workable when complete. This is handy when installing the trailer.

The entire assembly is represented in plastic, even though it's covered up by the actual fifth wheel. This item, by the way, has also got cast texture and foundry numbers on it.

The vertical lifting device is also added at this point. This thingee was used as a giant lever in conjunction with the winches and enabled the DW to act as a tow truck. It could actually lift the front of the Sherman right off the ground with this thing. Tamiya refers to it as the "A Arm," although I prefer

the even more mysterious French translation on the instruction sheet which reads "Potence."

The "potence" gets stowed by attaching the lower brace on top of the frame and then securing it to the winch bed. Tamiya depicts this correctly with a styrene inner tube and a brass outer sleeve. The plastic tube has holes in it and on the real thing these correspond with holes on the outer sleeve. When mounted in its correct position on the bottom of the frame, a cotter pin passes through these holes and this is how the frame is raised into various positions and used as a lifting device.

No holes are in the brass part and you'll have to drill them to show the device in use. Ever try drilling a hole in a piece of hollow tube? Last after market company to do this is a commie (I have to bitch about something, right?).

The instructions have you add the potence in the stowed position and it generally completes the back end. The tubes get attached later and they actually become part of the winch assembly.

I built, but only test fit the oxygen and acetylene tanks and their platform. I left this off for painting. The winch operating stand (which doubled as a locker for all the welding gear) was installed, checking its fit with the above item and the cab.

The exhaust pipe and muffler subassembly benefits from a lovely little etched heat sink. Tamiya provides a nifty loose plastic rod to wrap it around and form the screen. The etched material is on the delicate side, so be careful. The screen is secured with the provided copper wire, but the tabs will interfere with the winch bed later on if you mount

them away from the muffler. You can leave them facing forward, or it might be possible to trim them away after super gluing them to the exhaust pipe.

Beware part BI3. This is a square plate that mounts on the truck frame in front of the winch. If this is not properly installed, it will prevent the winch from sitting correctly on the frame. This is tough to see at this stage. It might even be prudent to carefully remove the locator marks and then position the panel a millimeter farther back on the frame.

The Bawling hour

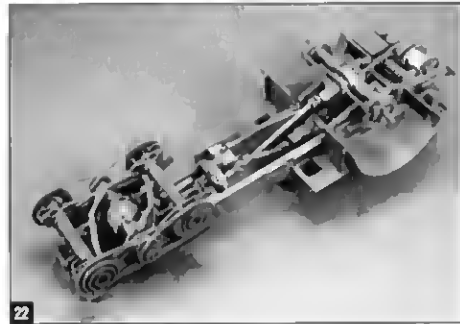
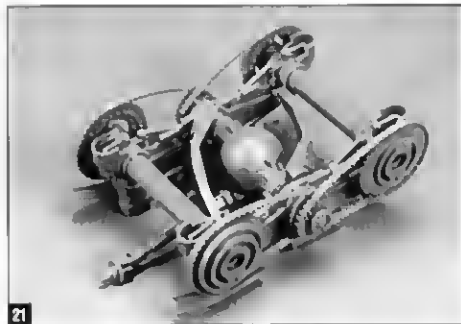
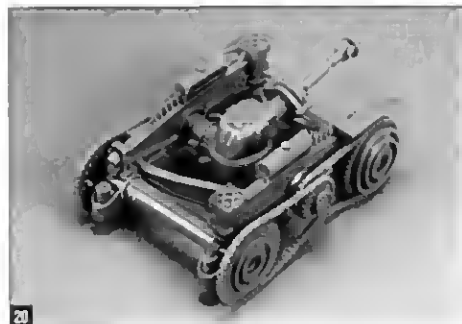
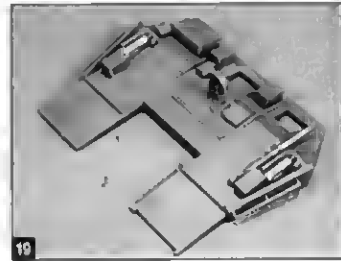
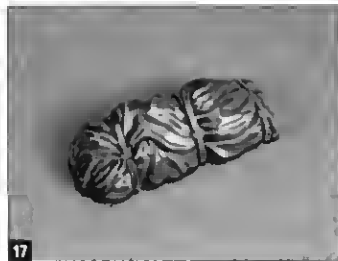
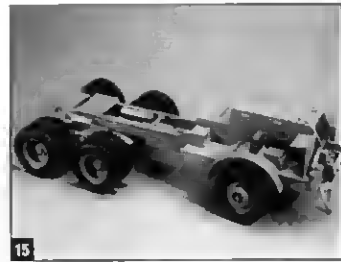
Perhaps the most mind-blowing part of the model for me is the winches. Having built all of the resin versions of the Dragon Wagon out there, I was shocked to see how simple and accurate Tamiya has made this all at the same time.

The major problem with this area on the resin kits is figuring out where everything goes. Not only that, the proper angle of all the various levers, etc., can be critical.

Big T boils all this down to five steps in the instructions and much of the work is already done when the parts come off the sprue.

The winches are both identical, but they are mounted on slightly different frames and each is installed in the opposite direction.

This is truly a model within a model and Tamiya has represented almost every single part of the real thing. All the inner linkages and gear is represented like the clutch yoke (a little half circle) and the PTO control lever. The automatic brake case covers even have teeny raised lettering.



12. The front wheel parts. Dig those poly cabs. 13. The rear wheel parts. I love the smell of rubber in the morning... 14. Both rear wheels get a metal axle. 15. It's up! I couldn't resist sticking all the wheels and tires on, just to take a look. All of the tires were left off for painting. They come on and off very easily. 16. Four OD dudes are supplied for the cab interior. Tamiya even provides a copy of YANK magazine for one of them to read! 17. Tamiya

continues to improve its "sculpted" items. This is the bundle for the top of the cab. 18. The neat little bagged Thompson for the interior ammo locker. 19. The rear cab wall is a single piece. Here it is with all the added gear. 20. 21. The top and bottom (or is it bottom and top?) of the rear drive train. 22. At this point all the suspension components are in place except for the wheels and tires.

A couple of interesting points on these two pieces. The real winches were made by Gar Wood Industries of Detroit, Michigan. In addition to making a butt-load of different PTO winches for the U.S. Army in WW2, Gar Wood is also famous for sponsoring the high speed boat races on the Detroit River every year.

If you look at pictures of the real housings you'll see raised letters which read: GAR WOOD INDUSTRIES DETROIT. The Tamiya part reads just: INDUSTRIES DETROIT. This makes me wonder if Gar Wood is still around and if they opted not to license their name for this model.

Another interesting point is the number which follows the above words. The number is 12Y4524. Checking photos of the real thing and the tech manual shows... the same number. I'm dizzy.

The only challenging part in building the winches is wrapping the nylon string around the winch drums (some challenge, huh?). I wanted to get a nice neat pattern, so as I wound each single circuit I added a drop of thin super glue which froze that layer in place. I added about four layers of string to each drum. The collet heads were filled as described above and added to the string ends.

Two etched pieces are wrapped around the drum ends to form the brakes. They are secured with more of the copper wire provided in the kit. This seems weird, but this is very similar to the way the real thing was attached.

As I said, all the shafts, levers and linkages are here and these are mostly represented by more of

those now famous Tamiya one-piece assemblies. I was especially impressed by the inclusion of the PTO chains on the backs of the winches and their respective shafts.

The only thing that's missing is the main link that feeds up from the transmission to the bottom of the winch. This is impossible to see and I'm not sure you could install it, unless you had a few little guys who live in a Suckets box.

Be careful aligning the winch control levers, their locating marks don't hold them real tight.

The winch bed itself is actually slanted just like the real DW—STOP IT, STOP IT—I CAN'T STAND IT!! STOP MESSING WITH MY MIND!!!

O.K. I'm better now

The last part to add to the tractor is what Tamiya calls the "Crane." The army calls this the "Erecting Crane and Hoist" and its primary purpose was to change those gigantic 14.00 x 24 tires.

At this point in the model I was pretty much exhausted by all the incredible little mind blowing details and accuracies. So when I saw the crane, I sort of muttered to myself in a monotone "Oh, I see that the crane is 100% accurate and that all the parts fit together perfectly. That's great."

A clear diagram shows the proper installation of the chain for the hoist. There were two chains on this thing. One to do the actual lifting of stuff and the other, which was a loop, to actuate the gears inside the hoist.

A handsome little set of tire tongs hangs from the end of the straight chain thanks to an etched hook and loop.

The first of the pre-formed and cut metal rods polishes off the construction of the crane.

Tamiya neglects to tell you that the crane fits in five different sockets on the tractor and trailer (I forgive them). More on this later. This crane seems to have been frequently installed on the tractor when it was used without the trailer.

Let's party! The tractor is done—Woo-hoo!!!

Trailer talk

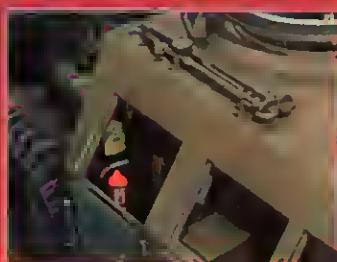
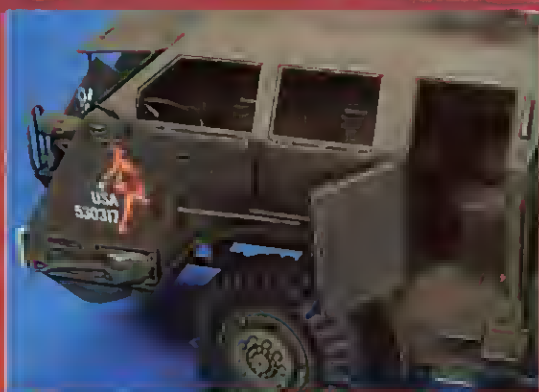
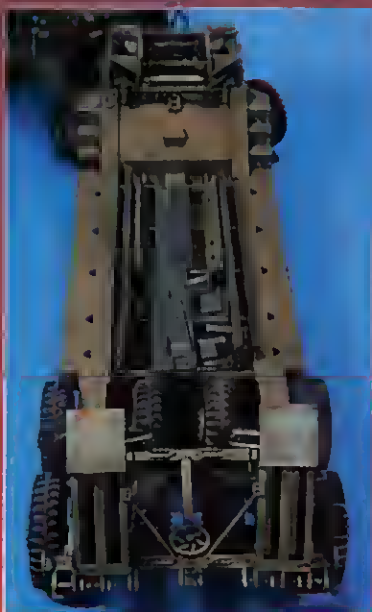
The construction of the trailer is not quite the drama that the tractor is, but it's still a fairly complex model. This is where the resin boys usually let us down, simplifying the trailer somewhat.

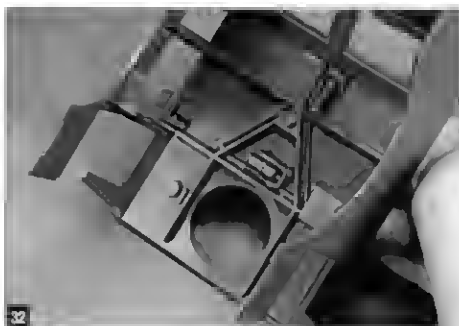
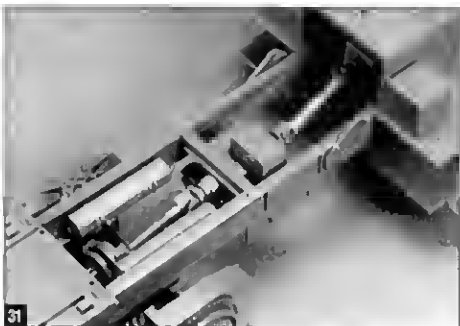
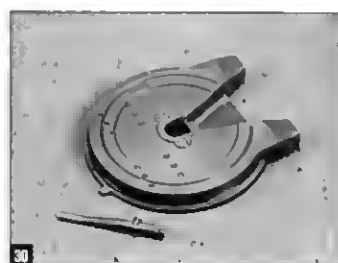
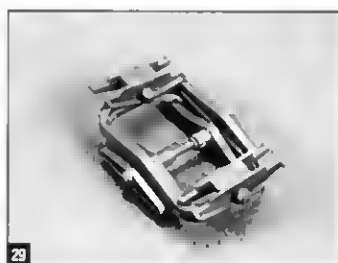
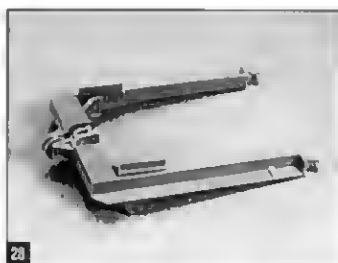
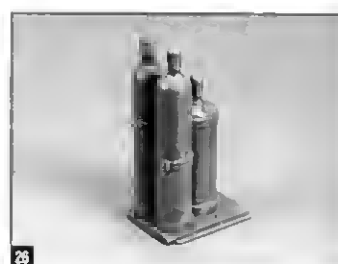
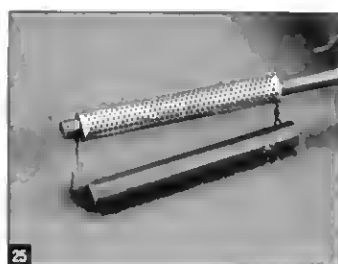
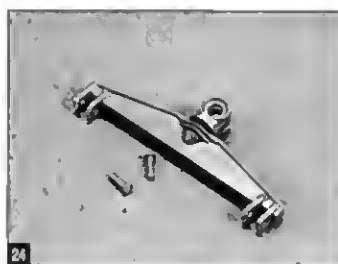
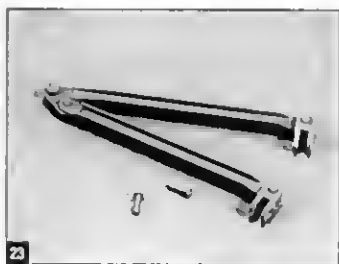
Tamiya has not dropped the ball here, the trailer is dead-on accurate and all the gear and equipment is present.

Construction kicks off with two of the largest pieces of plastic I have ever seen on an armor model. Basically the main part of the trailer is done, right out of the box. It is essentially split down its length and this is to accommodate two long metal reinforcing plates. These get screwed into the interior of the side stowage boxes. A great idea, these plates will prevent the trailer from warping and give it a scale load rating. Think about loading a weighty resin model on the back of this thing.

Resist the urge to over torque the screws on these plates. Tighten them just enough to seat the little spring washers provided.

A four-part metal subassembly makes up the hinges for each of the two ramps. Make sure you install them in the proper order. These will be





23. The front mounted tow bar. Even though it's installed on the front end, it'll still work. 24. The "whistle tree." This gets installed on the back of the cab. The little pins keep it on. 25. The complete etched heat sink for the exhaust. The plastic piece below it is used to form it. Note the wire looped through the part to keep it on the exhaust pipe. 26. The welding gas bottles for the back of the cab. 27. The locker and work stand for the winches. This is

where all the welding gear is stored. 28. The completed vertical lifting device. 29. The elaborate mechanism that quietly resides underneath the fifth wheel. 30. The fifth wheel with its casting numbers. 31. The square box in the center is the power take off transfer case. A chain feeds up from here to drive the winches. 32. A few of the detail parts on the underside of the cab roof. 33. The finished cab assembly.

trapped into place when the two trailer halves are mated. This is another great idea and it proves that the boys at Tamiya are always wearing their thinking caps. Later on, during painting, the ramps flop around like two fish and would have easily busted off if the hinges were plastic.

More screws are used to mate the two pieces of the trailer. These screws basically function as clamps and they could, in theory, be removed after the glue dries. They are cleverly hidden in the bottom of each socket for the tire crane. Also resist over tightening these screws as well. They bite into the plastic sidewall of the shaft in the part above and stripping them is easy.

Be careful filling and cleaning up the seam in the rear frame member, too. There is some flash here to deal with and it's easy to overlook at this stage.

More of those primo metal rods are used to create the stabilizers for the trailer ramps. These parts were permanently attached to the ramps and they will need to be carefully fit to their hinge on the base on the back of the trailer (parts M28, M30 and J33). Make sure this hinge remains workable, it'll screw you up later if it's not.

The largest amount of etch gets added to the trailer. All the skid plates, including the large ones that cover the side steps, are separate pieces.

The fit of these last parts is very precise and since super glue must be used to attach them, you won't get a second chance. I found it difficult to get a few of them completely flat against the plastic, while others fit absolutely perfectly.

The trailer support legs are fully detailed and they can be constructed to remain workable. Just remember that these were only meant to support the weight of the trailer unloaded.

The most complex parts on the trailer (perhaps one of the more complex areas of the kit) are the axles. Each gets four wheels and tires. On the real DW these axles pivot back and forth and each of the wheel yokes also pivots perpendicular to the main axles. Tamiya accomplishes all this with the clever use of metal axles and poly caps all around. All this also permits the axles to be moved back and forth on the trailer. This was used to accommodate wider loads.

Tamiya also did a great job on the brake drums on the trailer wheels.

All of the top deck gear is on board and Tamiya didn't skimp on this stuff. Everything listed in the tech manual as standard equipment for the trailer is on a sprue. I was very impressed by this.

The wheel guards for the back tires, all the different types of tread planks (there were three types), the jack ground boards, wheel chocks and the removable skids—they're all there man!

The wheel chocks are three separate pieces, so they are fully detailed on the sides. Neato.

The large wooden and metal platform skids also are among the sweetest parts of the model, adorned as they are with delicate wood grain detail.

All this stuff gets tossed into the bed of the trailer and it gives it a wonderfully jumbled look when it's complete.

The wheel guards are used to cover the wheels

during loading and they are stowed on the front of the trailer when not in use. Tamiya has ingeniously labeled each of the finished subassemblies with raised letters on their interior surface to aid in placing them in the stowed position.

I must admit to leaving mine unglued so I could take them off and impress my friends (this did not impress them, actually). And rumors that I play with my Dragon Wagon on the carpet are completely unfounded.

One of the last parts added to the trailer are the teeny air couplers to the face of the front end. These correspond to identical parts on the back of the tractor (sorry, I forgot to mention them). The provided vinyl tubing is used to create the air lines for the brakes. Excellent.

The ends will need to be thinned a little to get the tube over easily.

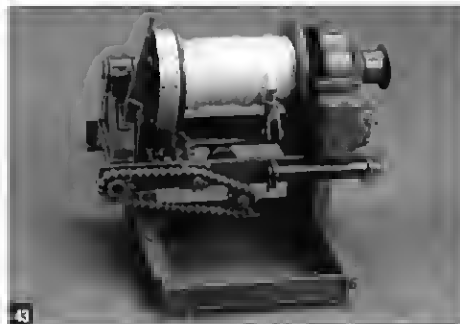
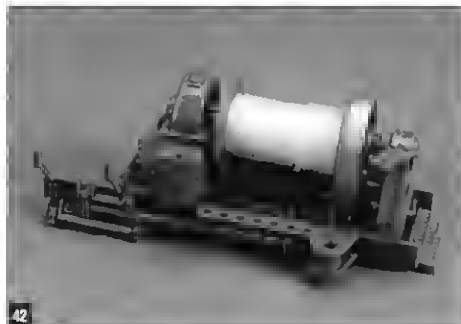
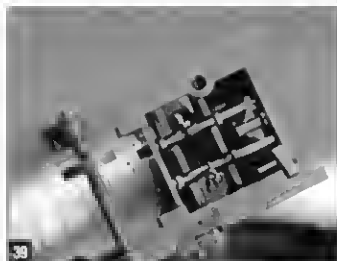
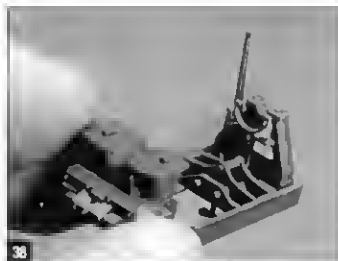
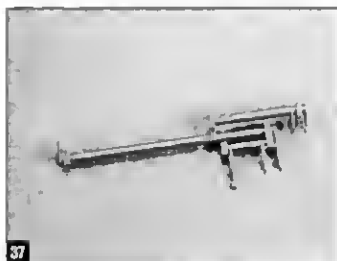
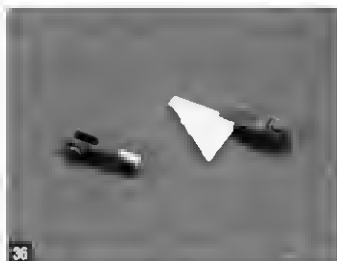
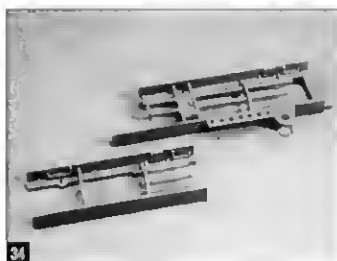
Believe it or not, at this point the model was pretty much done.

Painting: the odyssey continues

Painting a beast of this size calls for some careful planning, not to mention a few bottles of paint.

At this point I was left with the following sub-assemblies. The tractor, the cab, the winches, the crane, the gas bottles, those two little etched steps, all the wheels (minus their tires), the trailer (minus its wheels and tires) and all the trailer gear.

I usually like to have as much of the vehicle possible finished when I paint, but with this kit I was able to accomplish the entire paint, decal and weathering process with the above listed subassemblies.



34. These are the winch frames as they come off the sprue. 35. Check out the lettering on the winch brake housing. 36. I plugged the cable collets with styrene sheet, then drilled them out later. 37. One of the one-piece assemblies for the winch, in this case the linkages for the front of the front winch. 38. Detail of the inner workings on the winch. 39. The winch brakes are tied on with copper wire. 40. The completed tire crane with its chain and etched parts. Tamiya was the first to get that hoist right. 41. The completed rear winch. 42. The completed front winch. 43. Tamiya supplies all

the chain links for the winches. This is the feed chain for the front winch. 44, 45. The completed winches and winch bed. The bed is slanted forward, as it should be. 46. The metal bars used to reinforce the trailer bed. 47. The lower half of the bed. This is the part as it comes in the box with only the addition of the bars. A similarly large part completes the basic sub assembly. 48. The metal parts used to attach the trailer ramps. 49. The parts in action. 50. The basic parts for the trailer wheels and axles. 51. The two photo-etched sheets provided with the kit. 52. The tread plates applied to

I attached all the small loose parts to strips of balsa wood coated with double-stick tape. This includes the wheels, which were mounted on their sides. You can't see this area anyway, so it's not important if some of it doesn't get painted.

I started by priming everything in Polly-Scale Black. I used NATO Tri-Color Black which is still a bit on the dark gray side. I then went back over the surfaces with a mixture of Olive Drab and Dark Green, using the black to create some interesting shadow and depth effects. This entails applying the OD in light layers, working carefully over the entire surface. Less of the OD mixture was used on the under carriage to keep it in the shadows, so to speak.

Large panels, like those on the cab were carefully highlighted with the OD mixture lightened with Armor Dark Yellow.

One of the chrome light bezels forms the outer rim of the siren light and so this needed to be masked for painting. A blob of "Blu-tak" worked well for this and I left it in for the entire painting and weathering process (if you can call it that).

I opted to use the Tamiya decals and, as I've written before, I'm leery of their thick film. However, I couldn't resist that girly art. Close cutting Tamiya decals can help, but sometimes the cut edge remains as a slight ridge and this can be a problem later during drybrushing.

I close cut the large stars and the recognition hands using a sharp x-acto, but I left the girl alone (dammit) as well as the bumper codes, which were

too intricate to cut anyway.

These were applied over a coat of gloss and were made to snuggle down with Solvaset. So far so good.

I want to digress here a little (a little, yeah right) and tell y'all a story about the markings on this vehicle.

The DW depicted is from the 9th Army, 464 Ordnance Maintenance Company, Vehicle #34. This scheme is no doubt based on a photo taken near Aachen in November 1944. It shows a DW (sans trailer) hauling a trackless Panther through the streets (how embarrassing). The photo is a bit over exposed and as a result the lighter and white areas of the photo are washed out completely. This includes the large stars and pretty much all the markings. The girly art is visible as are the white stripes on the cab and bumper, as well as the triangular reinforcements for the front shutters.

The photo also shows two large light colored dots just under the front windows. Tamiya represents these on their decal sheet as white dots each with three parallel black lines. Hmmm. I am not all that familiar with this marking, but I am fairly sure that it is a lot of hokey.

I think that these are bridging disks. It stands to reason because all Allied vehicles were required to have them. However it is highly unusual that a vehicle would have two of them. Here is where I hit on a theory. Since the Dragon Wagon frequently operated as a single towing and recovery vehicle, as well as a tank transporter, it should technically have

two sets of bridging disks. One for the tractor alone and with its "drag weight," and the other with the tractor/trailer combo loaded and unloaded. Sounds reasonable, right?

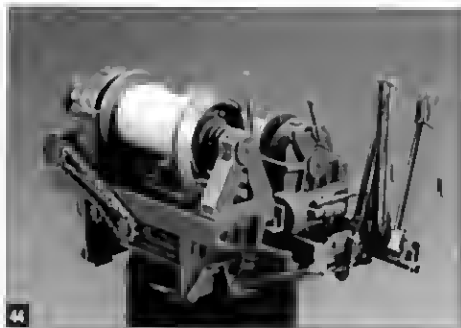
I ended up using the excellent bridging disk dry transfer set from the folks (or is it folk?) at Archer Fine Transfers. These things are truly fine, as they have been sitting in a drawer for at least two years and they show no signs of drying out or cracking and they still come off the sheet like they were brand new.

Using all my references, I came up with 24 over 74 for the right hand disk (the tractor alone) and 72 over 102 for the other. I did notice that bridging disk numbers almost never correspond to the actual listed weight of the vehicle. They were either way under or way over—mostly over. I based my numbers on other, single disks seen on Dragon Wagons.

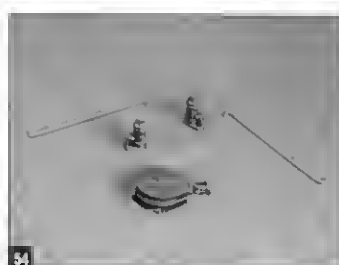
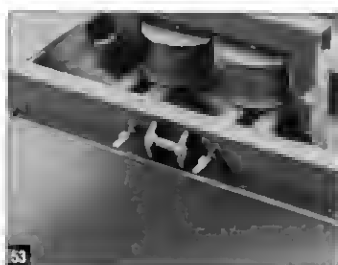
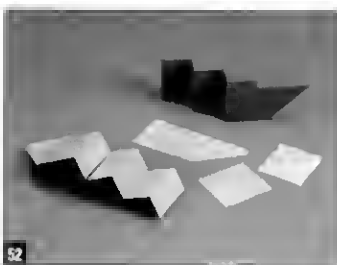
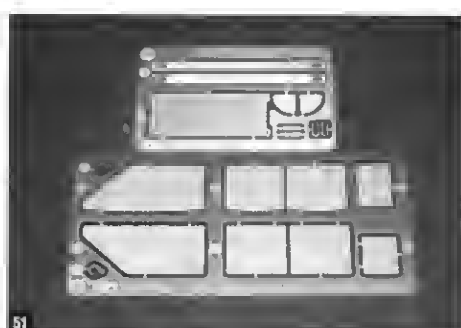
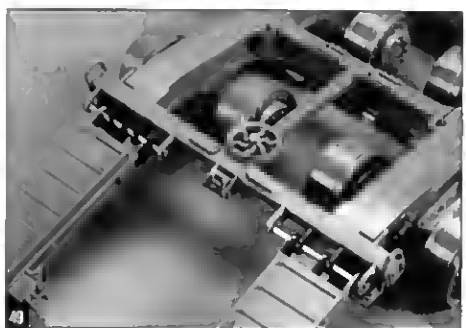
I wonder if Tamiya interpreted those disks as eye balls painted on by the crew?

I was also somewhat suspect of the bumper marking which lists the DW as attached to an army rather than to a specific division. I wasn't positive about this so I left them as is.

The decals were flat-coated with Polly-Scale flat and, much to my horror, this frosted the film—especially on the girly art. After screaming like a woman for several seconds, I calmed down enough to formulate a plan. I decided (more out of blind luck than anything else) that adding another type of flat coat might change the effect. I used the Vallejo acrylic flat coat (I have the Andrea labeled



the trailer side steps. 53. The air connection detail on the front of the trailer. 54. Some of the detail parts provided for the trailer; the stabilizer rods for the ramps; the 20-ton jacks and the snatch block. 55. The trailer legs. 56. The well-executed guide planks for the center of the trailer. 57. All the gear provided for the loading and unloading of your 1/35th scale tanks.

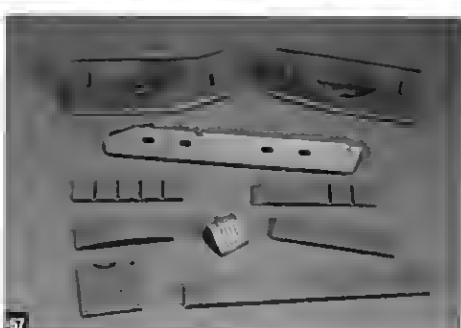
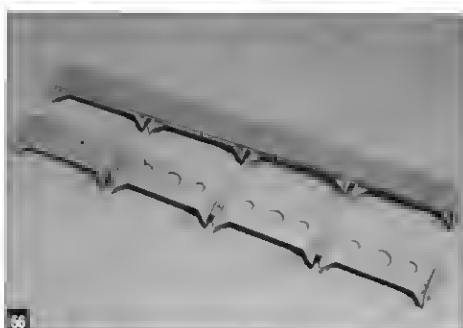


bottles). I shot on several light coats and it seemed to work quite well (whew!). The only drawback I have found with these acrylics (which I use almost exclusively for brush painting) is that they dry slowly for acrylics. With the flat coat, this meant not touching the surface for a few hours, lest a nasty finger print result.

Unfortunately, the humper codes were a total loss and I used Floquil paint and decal remover to exorcise them from the bumper. VP rub-downs were the substitute, using the same numbers.

Next time I will close cut the decals. I had no problem with "ridging" on the stars and the secret may be using a brand new blade to cut them out.

Once everything had cured for a day or so I gave the entire model an overall wash with black and dark brown W&N oil paint thinned with Model Master enamel thinner. This was very thin and more to the brown side. While the surface was still slightly moist, I went back over certain small details and added a teeny bit of a thicker mixture with a size 0 brush. This will not disperse the pigment

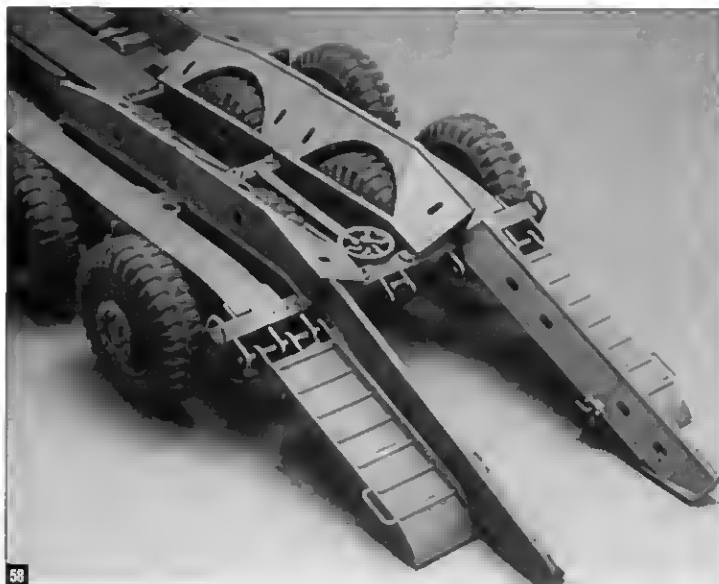


quite as much as the larger wash does. The big trick here is to do it while the surface is still barely moist. Even if this covers the top of the detail, it's O.K., because drybrushing will highlight it later on.

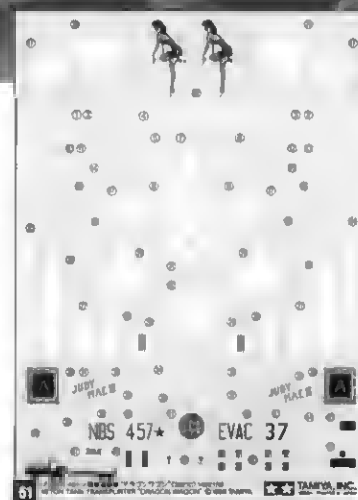
I drybrushed with more of the Vallejo paints, using light khakis and tans. Their slow drying is an attribute here, keeping more paint on the brush for longer and making for smoother effects.

The cables on the winch were painted black, then drybrushed with gun metal. The drive chains were also painted black, then given a few thin coats of Tamiya clear yellow to represent oil.

The various wood skids and ramps were painted dark brown over black, then washed with the brown mixture. They were then streaked with thinned black oil paint to enhance the wood grain effect. All



A few bonus photos... 58. This is how the trailer wheel guard and the guides for the ramps are supposed to work. Tamiya has also provided a nifty set of demonstration drawings in the instruction booklet that illustrate the proper use of the loading gear, as well as the right way to load and unload a tank from the trailer. That center pulley was not necessarily installed on the trailer in all cases. It could be removed and stored in the trailer bed. 59. 60. I never did glue the cab on the chassis; the fit being so precise, no glue was necessary. In these two shots all the painting and weathering on the interior is complete. I loved all the interior details and they dress up the innards real well. They are not obvious, but every once in a while you can catch a glimpse of them through the doors or the windows. 61. This is the decal sheet that is provided in the kit. It is easily the most elaborate set ever included in a armor kit. Note the white disks with the three parallel lines. Eyeballs perhaps?



the wood parts were finally dry brushed with gray.

The chrome bezels were shoe-horned into their various positions and they were secured with white glue, as were the lenses which cover them (the rear spotlights were my favorites). I finally had a chance to use Tamiya clear red for its intended purpose, which is to color clear parts. A few small drops were added to the inside of the lens for the siren. It really works perfectly.

The clear red was also used to pick out the various reflectors located on the trailer and the side lights on the trailer. For the reflectors, I added a small amount of silver to the reflector first.

How to finish those tires? Hmmm... Since they are real rubber, I figured the best thing to do was to try to weather them like real tires. I typically dry brush tires, as I know others do, but real tires don't get dirty around the edges, they generally get dirty down in between the treads. Repeated contact with a hard surface will also wear off dirt on the outer edges. I briefly considered using real dirt and mud, but finally hit on using pastels. Now, nineteen tires means a lot of pastels. I managed to locate the pre-ground pastel powder used by model railroaders and I liberally dusted the tires with it. I used a brush, but this could probably be accomplished with the "Shake 'n Bake" technique of throwing all the tires and powder into a bag and shaking. Rubbing the tires with an old cloth or just your fingers will remove enough of it to create a very realistic effect.

Final assembly meant installing the cab and the winches and the only difficulty was getting the

winch to sit down. I believe this was due to that plate mentioned (way) above.

The tires went right back on the rims and on their respective axles—no problem.

Aren't you done—yet?!

I think that's it. It was quite a kit to build and was truly entertaining every step of the way. I enjoyed the fact that I frequently had to stop to just laugh out loud at some clever feature or some bit of spot-on accuracy. This is truly the ultimate expression of Tamiya's unique art form. They really have to be congratulated for all the effort it must have taken to create and execute a model like this.

Whatever you do, DO NOT simply discount this kit because of its high cost. It represents all that we have bitched and griped about over the years. The inclusion of all the many small extras makes this the very first non-after market, after market kit.


The price doesn't seem all that much when you consider all the stuff that is in the box. There is little to seek out in the way of additional detailing parts. I found very little that wasn't present in the kit. A few of the sub-miniature linkage points were

missing from the winch controls and other than that, all I found was the metal reinforcing rod that runs from the fender to the bumper—and this is even missing on some vehicles.

When you get everything you want in a kit, it's got to come at a price right? I just hope that we will see some of these great little innovations in future Tamiya kits.

There are obviously tremendous diorama possibilities. There are two pages in the instruction booklet that are devoted to how to recover and deliver a tank—complete with drawings.

The tractor was frequently used alone and with the workable draw bar and whiffle tree, this makes for even more possibilities. And what to do with the left over trailer? Tank Workshop will soon release its M123 tractor, which was the post war successor to our friend. It used the M15A1 trailer and it wouldn't be too hard to convert the trailer to use along with it (hey TWS, how about it?).

I am looking forward to building my next Dragon Wagon already! 

—Pat Stansell

MMIR RECCE

Tamiya Dragon Wagon U.S. 40 ton tank transporter. Kit number 35230. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$115.00.

References

For a complete list of references, please see issue number 17 of Military Miniatures in Review.

On Blitzzen!

ONE CLASSIC ITALERI KIT WITH EVERYTHING ON IT, PLEASE



At the beginning of World War Two, Opel was already a major player in the German automobile industry. Having designed a number of civilian transport trucks, Opel shifted with relative ease into wartime production. The Opel Blitz 3-ton "S" (probably for Standard or Series) was the most widely produced transport of the war, with 82,356 units produced between 1937 and 1944. By cleverly designing a military vehicle with many components already proven in civilian automotive circles, Opel hit pay dirt. The Blitz quickly endeared itself to the German forces with its three-ton payload, 3.6-liter gasoline (not diesel) engine, and extreme reliability, and was found on every front of the war. The Blitz had a variety of minor alterations in its cargo bed, yet went largely unchanged throughout the war. Six of these alterations are shown on page 29 of the Schiffer reference. When researching Blitz photos, be advised that 25,000 all-wheel drive Blitzes were also manufactured. The simplest way to spot the all-wheel drive version is by the side vent panels on the engine hood; the all-wheel drive Blitz has vent panels with straight bottom edges,

while the standard Blitz panels are over the curve of the fenders. This is correctly featured on the Italeri kit which has been with us for over two decades. The incredibly popular Blitz has become a hallmark to modelers—a fine kit with virtually unlimited versatility. It probably has the distinction of being the easiest kit around to "production line," as you can line up ten boxes of Blitzes and crank out a scale transport column in no time at all with only a cursory glance at the instructions. At a good vendor table, you can still find this truck under the old "Italaerei" label, before they shortened the name, or in a Testors/Italeri box with the dark yellow accents. While other armor kits in the Italeri line have come and gone and come again, the Blitz remains with us as good ol' kit number 216.

The overview

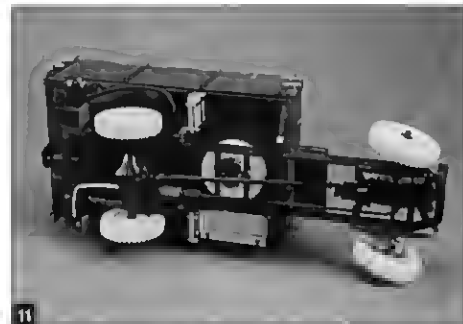
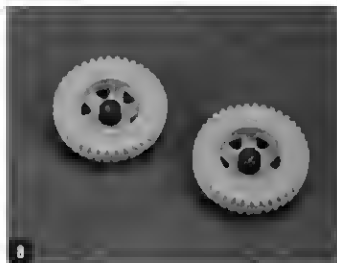
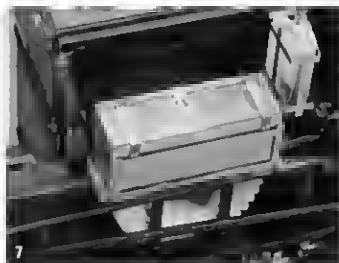
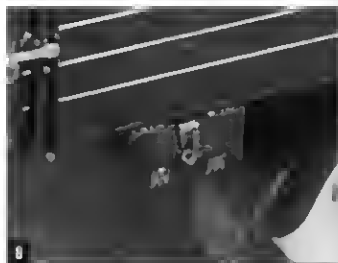
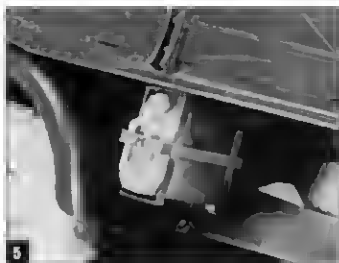
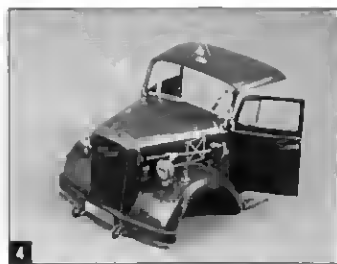
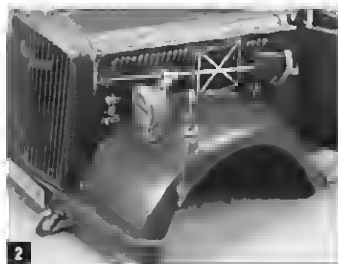
A decent little detail set from Show Modelling came along in the early 90s, but it wasn't until 1997 that Eduard stepped in with a fully comprehensive package. Eduard's been on a roll the last couple of years, pumping out sets for the latest kits as well as sets for yesterday's classics. The most interesting factor about both Blitz detail sets is that they don't

require gutting the model, yet add a significant level of detail and accuracy. The Eduard update in particular makes an excellent starter set if you've been hesitant about working with photo-etch, and it's amazing how many details they've added to a kit with no armor or armament. Almost everything on the Eduard fret made the final cut, along with select goodies from Show. Entering stage left is a fine set of resin wheels from The Tank Workshop.

To make things more interesting, it was decided to add a Flak 38 to the cargo bed. Tamiya's classic little kit filled the bill nicely. It is available by itself, and occasionally gets re-released in one of those big boxes with the Horch 1a and SS crew. Once again, it's Show and Eduard to the rescue, each set offering incredible details for a very small kit. And what's a flak truck without an ammo trailer?

And now, on with our program

The undercarriage and engine were assembled first. The engine is virtually invisible once the cab is attached, so I left the engine as is out of the box. The exhaust pipe was replaced with a length of aluminum tubing. Eduard provides a really nifty cargo box which attaches to the frame on the left side.



1. The detailed jack and the etched running boards, both curiosity of Eduard. 2. This nren is a mixture of both the Eduard and the Show Modelling sheets, plus replacement headlight from Royal. These were further dressed up with front covers from the Show Modelling sheet. 3, 4. Two views of the completed cab prior to painting. The original kit is festooned with added details. Beware the box top of the kit, the photo is actually a mirror image. 5. The etched spare Jerry can rack. 6. Latch and lock details for the locker under the cargo bed. 7. The very elaborate cargo box formed

from Eduard parts. Also seen here is another of the gas can racks. 8. The Tank Workshop resin replacement wheels. The kit hubs stay. 9. All of the completed interior details. It's quite an array of fun. I used my punch and die set to create disks from doll house mirror material to form the side view mirrors. They really work! The triangle on the top of the cab was to warn oncoming vehicles that this truck was pulling a trailer. 10. The chassis before adding the cab. Note my wires leads to the side turn signals. 11. The completed chassis showing off all the added parts.

Following the Italeri instructions, the cargo bed was assembled separate from the frame. Other Eduard details include the mud flaps, fender braces, tool box details and padlocks, jerry can racks, and license plate/taillight components. A bit of fine wire was added to wire up the taillight, and a pair of Italeri jerry cans found a home. Tank Workshop has added resin brake drums to their Blitz wheels, and during the painting phase I added a bit of brass rod to each for valve stems, plus wire for front brake lines.

Next came the cargo bed sides. The Blitz sported a wooden cargo bed so, while removing various injection marks I distressed the wood a good deal to indicate all the traffic going in and out of the truck. I shaved off the outside grab handles and added the tiny, hair-like replacements from Show's fret. Fortunately, you get plenty of extras, because they will vaporize if you breath on them. I finally mixed 50/50 my standard Techstar Gap-Filling Insta-Cure Cyanoacrylate with Super Glue Gel and got a good solution for affixing these minuscule parts. Eduard's turn signals were added to the front wall, along with appropriate wiring leading under the cab. Four sections of Minimeca tubing were added to the left and right side walls as supports for the canvas top frame. The frames themselves were formed by bending floral wire (available wherever fake plants are sold) to match the kit part. In numerous photos, these four frames are shown stacked on the front lip of the cargo walls. Close examination reveals brackets

holding these frames in this position, so these were made from scrap bits of photo-etch.

The really giddy part is the corner latches for the cargo bed walls. Page 30 of the Schiffer reference shows these to good effect. The swinging latches were tubular with bulbous ends. I used Techstar .020 rod to make 'em, dipping the longer pieces in white glue for the swollen handle. Thin strips of lead foil were rolled up to make the female halves. There are two of these latches on each corner. The bed and three walls were then attached to the frame.

Call me a cab

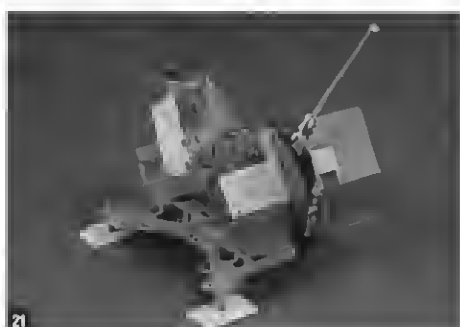
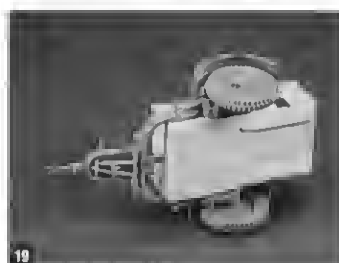
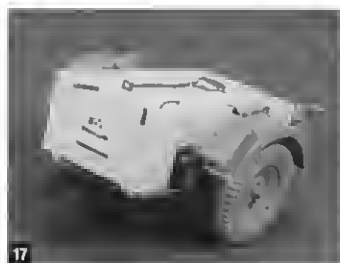
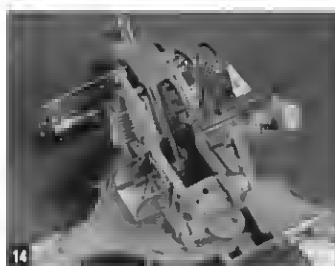
Having built half a dozen Blitzes over the years, I've learned two things: 1) Italeri dark green plastic develops the heinous white frosting when treated with superglue. This is easily removed with spit and a Q-tip. Or you can leave it alone. 2) It is very difficult to paint the inside of the cab after it is fully assembled. So with lots of interior detail to add, it finally struck me to simply leave off the back wall of the cab until everything was painted. (You've probably been doing this for years.) The fit of the cab is extremely good; it's a good idea to tightly tack the cab pieces together with just a dot of superglue, and once it's all aligned, redo the glue joints from underneath the hood.

The Blitz cab is where a lot of detail really makes this kit shine. On the inside, Eduard provides a new dashboard, so the molded details on the Italeri dash were scraped off. Also provided are

clutch, brake, accelerator, and starter pedals, floor plates, door handles and window cranks, frames for the little opera windows on each door, and a truly cool rifle rack on the passenger side. The triangular doodad on the roof was raised to tell oncoming traffic that the vehicle was towing a trailer, so up it went. Eduard provides new facing plates and I ran a wire through the roof to a parts box knob. One photo just shows a thin support beam running across the ceiling, which I fashioned from Plastruct channel. I fired up the seat over a candle, warming it enough to push a few folds into the plastic, and then scribed the seams with a hobby knife.

Outside the cab, more goodies. Eduard adds exquisite step tread for the running boards, along with tiny rain gutters for the top of each door. Twin mirrors were made from Minimeca tubing for the door mounts, brass rod for the arms, and punched sheet plastic and doll house mirror sheet for the actual mirrors. A tiny bracket from Royal Model was mounted on the back of each mirror. The spotlight on the driver's side was fashioned from the end of a resin artillery shell drilled out to receive a clear GREIF lens later. A bit of wire, spare etch bracket, and a watch screw finished the job.

That Schiffer photo on page 30 gives a fine view of many other details, including the tiny loops on each towing hook and the distinctive width indicators. The width indicators featured flat discs rather than the familiar knobs. I used Minimeca stainless steel rod, punched plastic discs, and lead foil for the



12. The foot pedal and shield bracket added to the gun. 13. The left hand side of the gun. This shows the bracket on that side of the shield and the ready round racks. Also notice my home made "feet" for the gun. 14. More of the detail fest on the gun; spent shell basket on the right. The platform next to sight arm was further detailed with a watch gear. 15. Another view of the main sight showing the Show Modelling pieces. I added the tracking cable on the arm from wire. 16. The latch here is from On-the-Mark, from their Latches & Padlocks set #3539. The white metal spade is from my scrap box.

17, 18, 19, 20. Overall views of the trailer. The chassis of the trailer is left over from the Tamiya flak 38 kit. Just like the real thing, this now redundant item was made useful by the addition of an ammo locker. The box of the trailer was actually formed of LEGO blocks, then covered with sheet styrene. The long pinno hinges are another Aber item (what would we do without them?). 21, 22. Overall views of the finished gun. I chose to add the shield provided in the Eduard set, as it already included the rivets. The mounting bars for the shield were scratch built.

brackets. Four two-part hood latches were added, along with Show's pennant on a scratch made pole. The headlights are a bit lacking, so I rescued the discards from last issue's Tamiya Hanomag. Eduard brackets and Show blackout covers were added, plus a thin strip of lead foil around the posts, and very fine copper wire was run through the fenders to the engine compartment. It's worth mentioning at this point that when you go a-Blitzing, note that the front third of the hood ornament protrudes over the frame of the grill. This probably served as a stop when closing the hood.

As I moved on to the three tools—jack, spade, and pick—I noted something of great interest. The Blitz photo on the current Italeri box is backwards. (This is known to happen when the printer flips a negative during layout.) You'll note that the jack and pick are shown on the driver's side, and close examination reveals that the finely inscribed Opel Blitz logo on the grill is reversed. This isn't a dig on our good friends at Italeri; after spending eight years in the printing industry in a former life, believe me, I feel their pain.

It's Eduard again with the mounting arms for the three tools, along with Aber's three-part tool brackets from set #35A04. Note how the thinner end of the pick runs through the Eduard bracket. New glass all around was cut from thin clear acetate. 125 detail parts found their way onto the cab, which was set aside as the second sub-assembly.

Get flakked

Time to give this baby some firepower. Tamiya's 20mm Flak 38 is just the ticket. For best results, pick up both the Show Modelling and Eduard detail sets, because once again you have two companies taking two very different approaches. The Show set even includes a turned aluminum barrel. Lay out all three instruction sheets, because almost every plastic part is going to get dressed up and there's a lot of cross-checking to be done. However, good references are a must, because unless you're a retired German factory worker, you probably won't have a clue what the tiny parts are, and both etch instructions are pretty vague in places. Check out *Verlinden's Warmachines No. 16, German Infantry in WWII*, by Nick Adams; it includes nine excellent color photos of a restored Flak 38 and towing trailer.

I started by cleaning up injection marks and trimming down the receiver to receive the aluminum barrel. Both etch sets are chock full o' goodies, as seen in the photos. Show provides an awesome cage for catching spent shells, along with a template for forming the frame from copper wire. Both sets include the armored plates—I found Eduard's to be more user friendly, as Show's offering requires the attachment of all the rivets. Both sets also require the use of the kit mounting bar for these large plates, but it must be extensively modified to the point of extinction. A new bar was fashioned from spare parts and aluminum tubing. I also added the front flap for the optics box, a scratch built auxiliary

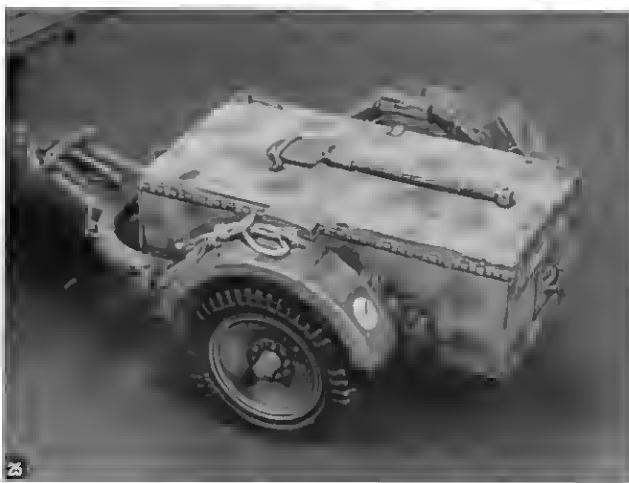
scope sight, and the tracking cable on the sight mounting arm.

Research seems to indicate that many wheeled flak vehicles were not factory-made, but a field modification. Sheet plastic and Grandt Line bolts were used to fashion mounting plates for the three feet.

Hittin' the trailer

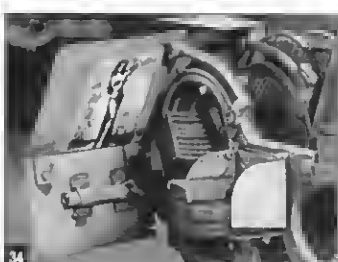
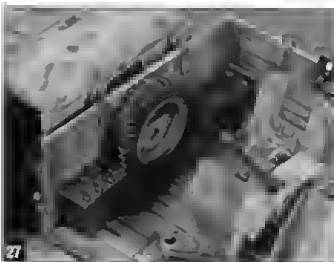
Phase three of the project is the ammo trailer. German light and medium vehicles sporting the Flak 30 or Flak 38 towed the SdAh.51 trailer, an interesting modification of the standard limber. The Ryton reference includes some marvelous shots of this trailer, particularly on pages 58, 187, 188, 189, and 190. In essence, the tubular U-shaped frame was outfitted with a large hinged-top box for carrying enough 20-round magazines to feed the 220-450 rpm flak gun. The Tamiya Flak 38 kit includes the trailer as used for towing the gun, and the conversion to the ammo carrier is fairly straightforward.

Using various photos in the Ryton book, I was able to determine the dimensions of the box. Note how the lid sits just below the tops of the fenders, and how far the box extends in the back; also how the front of the box is stopped by the curvature of the tube frame. A basic form was built using Lego blocks and thick plastic. When I had it about right, I held the box inside the assembled Tamiya trailer and gauged it against photos in the book. Pretty darn close. To simplify the metal plates on the exterior of the box, I coated one side with super glue, slammed the box onto a sheet of something thou



23, Overall view of the finished cab interior. This is a considerable improvement over the stock kit! Eduard's gauges are always a thrill. Check out that cool little rifle rack. 24, The finished and painted gun sitting in the bed. 25, The completed trailer doing its thing. 26, Flak gun, the final product. One of the favorite parts is the shell catcher basket—a Show Modelling Item. 27, 28, What's a

truck without all that requisite gear laying around? Ammo can in the front from Tamiya and a VP trap in the back. 29, The painted jack. 30, Most German tow hooks on trucks and half tracks had small loops on the ends. 31, The finished spot light. The lens is from GREIF and the back end is a watch part. 32, The corner latches formed from .020 rod and white glue. 33, The front seat was heated to create folds. 34, It seems so bare without it. 35, The license plate and towing pintle. 36, The glass for the sight was cut from thin acetate and the sight lines were scribed in with a knife.



plastic sheet, shot it with accelerator, and trimmed around the edges. Nice and even—after all, what can be more square than a Lego? Each of the six sides of the box was thus treated, saving lots of freehand measuring and cutting.

Time for details. A copper wire handle was added to the top of each fender, presumably used for pulling and turning the trailer. Two lengths of ABER workable hinges (set #35A39) were run down the left edge of the lid. (These can be a real bugger, but are well worth the effort. I finally discovered that it's easier to glue the two sides of the hinges in place on their respective surfaces, then curve the teeth until they lock together.) Opposing handles from copper wire were added to the opposite edge, apparently so the lid could be grabbed from either side. Bits of lead foil were used as the lid stops; one photo shows that the lid only opened about 5" past vertical. There are no latches visible in the photos, leading me to believe that a single latch was hidden behind the right fender. It's On The Mark this time, with their Latches & Padlocks set #3539.

Front and rear details were added according to the photos. There are large handles on each of the front edges of the tube frame, and L-shaped hooks just below the front lip of the lid. The rear boasts a door or drawer in the lower center of the box, probably for tools, which was assembled from scrap parts. A metal spade of unknown origin (Hornet? Andrea?) came to rest on the lid. Lead foil, plastic rod, and Grandt Line bolts were used to fashion the plates where the frame hooks lock on to the ammo box body. Beneath the box body, two curved runners were attached; these were either counterbalances or bumpers to protect the box when the trailer was tilted back on the turf.

Photos show two minor alterations in this particular trailer. First, some had an "at the ready" magazine box mounted inside each fender. Tamiya includes 'em, and on they went. Secondly, there were a series of brackets and hooks on one or both fenders, seemingly used to stuff tarps and ropes. I added such brackets to the left side. Scrap parts were used to form a connection between the front of the box and the tube frame. License plates seem to be optional on this trailer, so I left 'em off. Other small details are evident in the photos.

And the count goes on

One Italeri truck, one Tamiya flak gun, plus 431 extra goodies.

Hermann's Germans in living color

At this point, I had several subassemblies ready for painting: the frame with cargo bed and four wheels attached; the cab with separate rear wall and seat; the fourth side of the cargo bed; the assembled flak gun; the four canvas top frames; the two outside rear wheels plus the extra spare; and the assembled trailer. I was itchin' to do a Hermann Goring Division vehicle, as a photo on page 16 of the Osprey HG reference shows a Blitz tooling through Italy with "green mottle over dark sand-yellow."

All pieces were first sprayed with a can of white Krylon primer and left to dry for two days. Next, everything was airbrushed with Badger ModelFlex Mud, which is really more of a dark sand-yellow color. Tamiya Black Green came next to add the same green mottle shown in the photo. I got to thinking about flak trucks in general, and how if Obergefreiter Klingfeld had a bit of green paint left over during his field application of the camouflage, he might consider painting the inside of the cargo bed as a little extra protection against Allied aircraft. So, the inside of the truck bed got dotted as well. The appropriate Luftwaffe license

plates sprang from the parts box. Hermann Goring unit markings on the Southern Front were clear and simple compared to other divisions. In this instance, a white disc with a red clock arm at two o'clock indicates 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, Flakregiment Hermann Goring. A drafting template was used to draw the circles, which were then hand painted. Four kill rings were painted around the flak barrel, and the "Keep Back" warning was hand painted on the back of the trailer.

A very thin wash of Flat Black enamel plus Raw Umber and Burnt Sienna artist oil paint was then applied to the entire parade, and once it dried detail painting commenced. Flat planes received a gentle scrubbing of Yellow Ochre/Titanium White artist oils to bring up the highlights. At this stage the mirrors, steering wheel, cab glass, seat, and GREIF lenses for the spotlight and rear reflectors were all attached, along with Eduard's acetate gauges for the dashboard. A small square of clear acetate was cut out to fit the Flak 38 box sight, and a cross-hair scribed into it. This sight was installed using Testor's Clear Parts Cement.

I intended to use Show's windshield frame, but found it didn't quite fit my new acetate windshield. Meet Line O Tape, a new masking and striping tape. I used 1/64" Brushed Silver, peeling it and pushing it into place with a toothpick. The four corners were then cleaned up and a wash of Raw Umber added. Photos indicate that the windshield frame and wipers were often a straight metallic color on the Blitz, as if unpainted or possibly due to glass replacement. Show's wipers went on next; factory

photos show them laying toward the passenger side, but they vary in almost every field photo. In other words, as long as you glue them at the bottom of the windshield, you can't go wrong in the way they're positioned!

Several hours were spent picking out metal wear and highlighting, and the lower part of the truck and trailer received a gentle drybrushing of dust. The cargo bed requires extra care here; it's not immediately apparent, but there are seven metal rails running amongst the wooden slats of the bed. The bed itself has a metal edge; the four sidewalls are topped by metal; and the front and rear walls have metal edges as well. I used a very thin rusty metal mixture and painted metal wear on all of these areas, accentuated with a regular lead pencil. A gunky wash of Polly S Dirt was smeared on the windshield, and a brush dampened with thinner was used to swipe clean the wiper areas.

I've got several ideas working for a diorama on this one, so I went light on the extras. The seventh Tank Workshop wheel was "bolted" to the front cab wall. There's a Tamiya rifle in the cab, and a tarp, ammo cans, and map from VP. Three extra Tamiya ammo clips were placed in the clip holder on the left side of the Flak 38.

All in all, a fun build. Whether you've just wandered back into modeling or been panzering for years, there's a world of detail waiting on an Opel Blitz. It's a great starter project for those looking to make their first foray into photo-etch or super-detailing. Dash away, dash away, dash away all.

—Field Marshall Joe Porter (ret)

MMIR RECCE

Italeri Opel Blitz 3(t) Type S. Kit number 216. You're still the one, after all these years. Well detailed and a fine build. Retail price \$19.00.

Eduard Model Accessories Opel Blitz Detail Set. Set number 35154. Oodles and oodles of etch to bring your Blitz to life. Retail price \$19.99.

The Show Modelling Opel Blitz and Maultier Detail Set. Set number 011. An earlier set lacking a few key items, but has those fabulous grab handles and windshield frame, plus some generic extras. Retail price \$14.95.

The Tank Workshop Opel Blitz Wheels. Set number 1049. Pure resin heaven. Six wheels, plus two spares and separate brake drums. Hoo-ah. Retail price \$12.00.

Tamiya German 20mm Flak 38. Kit number 35102. Two sprues of plastic joy build into a great little model. Includes towing trailer. Retail price \$5.50.

Eduard Model Accessories Flak 38 Detail Set. Set number 35049. Great etch set, including armored shields. Don't mind the label, which says it's for the Hasegawa kit, 'cause there's no such critter. Retail price \$11.99.

The Show Modelling 20mm Flak 38 Detail Set. Set number 092. Perhaps their finest hour. Includes mesh cage for spent shells, plus turned aluminum barrel. Retail price \$29.95.

GREIF Lenses. Convex clear and colored lenses with metal backs, available in a variety of sizes and colors. Made in Mexico, and nobody does it better. Clear spotlight lens is 3mm #204A; red reflectors are 2mm #202B. Sets of 4 lenses retail for \$5.95. Collect 'em all at your local hobby shop.

Line O Tape. A happenin' new product, available in plenty of colors, plus regular ol' masking tape. Widths vary from 1/64" on up. Colored tapes are 10' rolls, masking tapes are 20' rolls. Once you buy some, you'll find about seventeen zillion uses for it. The 1/64" Brushed Silver used for the Blitz windshield frame retails for \$2.95.

References

Opel at War. Schiffer Publishing, 1991. Probably the most concise history of the Blitz for the money. Thorough explanation of the production and minor variants.

German Halftracks in Action. Squadron/Signal Publications, Armor Number 3, 1972. This series is long out of print, but a surprising number of modelers have it on the shelf. No Blitzes here, but some excellent shots of the Flak 38, along with numerous half-tracks.

Militärfahrzeuge of the Wehrmacht, Vol. 1. Ryton Publications, 1997. Good shots of the Blitz, the Flak 38, and the Sd. Ah. 51 ammo trailer, plus lions and tigers and bears, oh my.

Warmachines No. 16: German Infantry in WWII. Verlinden Publications, item #929. Photos by Nick Adams of a reenactment group feature several splendid color shots of a Flak 38.

Fallschirmpanzerdivision Hermann Goring. Osprey Vanguard #4, 1978. Long gone, so grab it if you find it. A most excellent history of the unit, including equipment, markings, and uniforms.

Panzer Colors III. Squadron/Signal Publications, 1984. The third volume in perhaps the all-time best armor reference series includes a chapter on Hermann Goring markings, plus plenty of other stuff. If you don't have the Panzer Color series, you're not taking this hobby seriously enough!

Panther on rails

GET YOUR FELINE ROLLING WITH A RAIL CAR FROM DML



All photos by Barry Beaudry

This review is of the Dragon Schwerer Plattformwagen Typ SSy (heavy flat-car) and the Shanghai/Dragon Panzerbefehlswagen Panther Ausführung G (Sd.Kfz.171) with gummi-gefederten stahllaufrollen, (resilient all steel road wheels). Blah! Try and say all that with a mouthful of caramel corn? Hold on, let me get a napkin...

The Panther

The Shanghai/Dragon Panzerbefehlswagen Panther Ausf G, is part of their Imperial Series, which our wallets have come to know and love as an, ex (expensive) Gunze Sangyo kit.

This kit is what I call a, (maybe-maybe not) Panther. There is no evidence that I know of, or a number of other people can find, that shows this configuration of Panther, in action, with a full set of steel wheels. Tom Jentz, in his book, *Germany's Panther Tank The Quest For Combat Supremacy*, states, on p. 96 that, 24 Panthers were fitted with steel wheels (Fgst.Nos 121032-121055) in September of 1944. The chin mantlets were also introduced in Sept. 1944, but I can find no evidence of them together with a full set of steel wheels. There may very well have been, but I am cautious to build anything that I do not have photo or written evidence of.

While we're on the subject of steel wheels, this may be of interest. In March/April of 1945, MAN Werkes fitted an unknown number of Panthers with a set of steel wheels only on the last axle station. Photos of these exist and I thought hey... this would make an interesting conversion. You would, of course, have to update the kit a bit more to the March/April 1945-time period.

Panzerbefehlswagen (command vehicle)

Included with your late model G, are parts that make up the command variant. These sneaky felines carried an extra radio and antenna. DML supplies the extra crows foot antenna, along with its armored antenna-mounting pot. This antenna and mounting pot were usually, but not always, mounted at the center rear of the engine deck.

A set of elongated antenna stowage tubes are also included and these were mounted underneath the gun cleaning stowage tube on the left side of the hull just above the sponsons.

The command variant had the mantlet-mounted machine gun removed and plugged, but somehow DML missed this detail. No big deal, a little styrene rod, a file and Voila! You have a plug.

The Kit

If you are familiar with other DML/Dragon/Shanghai Panthers, this one will not

surprise you. Assembly was standard DML, all the way. A little flash here and there and a few of those dreaded DML oversize locating holes.

One area needing attention is the rear engine deck. This is where many of those oversize locating holes will need to be filled. My filler is the same color as the plastic so I marked it with another color in the photos. If you want to get fussy (depending on what batch you are modeling), you could correct the mounting holes for the engine deck. Around the middle of Jan. 1945, half of the bolts that mount the rear engine deck were plugged and later eliminated. DML provides the earlier type of deck.

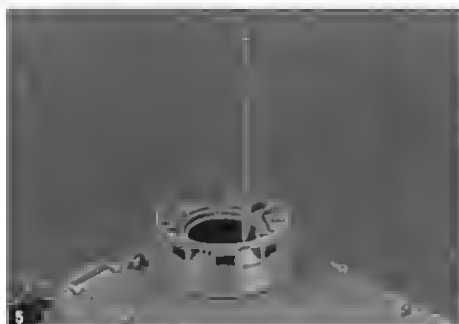
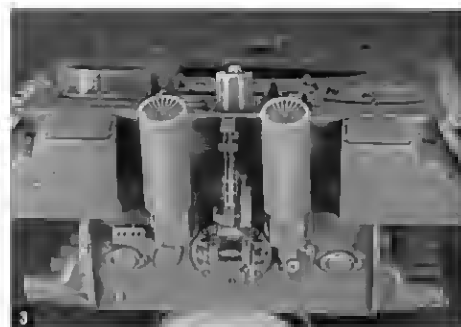
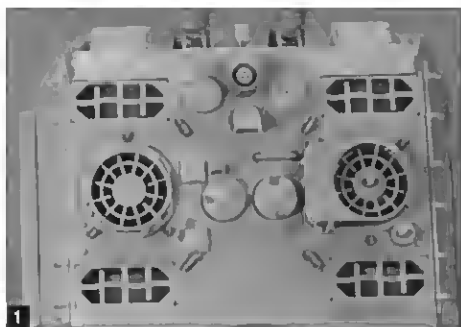
The placement of the forward lifting hooks on the engine deck hit the turret armor at the lower rear of the turret. This kept it from rotating a full circle. No big deal, a bit of filing will free her up.

Be sure and fill the forward seam on parts M18. These are the filler panels that DML uses to model the smaller engine vents on the G variant.

You may consider eliminating part F13, which appears to be a latch to hold the engine hatch open. I have never seen photos of its use.

I had trouble fitting the side fender mounts underneath the jack block and tool rack. I had to trim away some of the detail in order to get it to fit. No decent fender mounting brackets are included.

I mounted the commander's observation



1. The rear deck, scene of some of those dread oversized DML locnting holes. Not a problem, just a little filler fixes them right up. I darkened the areas slightly, so they would be visible in the photo. 2. A little filling was necessary to close up the sponsons. 3. The flame suppressors for the exhaust were one of the distinguishing features of the late G model. 4. The right hand tool suite. This is the old Gunze kit and the overall detail is quite good. 5. This is the

commander's observation periscope. I decided not to add it to the finished model. 6. The completed back deck. The command antenna is visible here dead center on the deck. 7. Those gummi-gefederten stahllauffrollen and the DML link-to-link tracks. 8. DML has rendered the flame suppressors pretty well. 9. The chin mantlet is evident here. I was unable to find any information about late style G models being fitted with the steel wheels.

periscope early on in construction (see photos) and then later, decided to eliminate it. It would not be necessary while this Panther was prowling around on a railcar. The Sehstab, (periscope-mount) was not installed in Panther G turrets anymore after July 1944, Jentz, p. 90.

I did not use any photo-etch with this review, so I thinned out many of the kit parts, such as the muffler mounting brackets, track mounting cable bracket, hatch handles, etc.

The front fenders did not fit their mounts very well, so I trimmed off the mounting tabs and mounted them directly to the hull.

This late of Panther should have a rain guard over the driver's rotating periscope, as this was introduced in July 1944. DML does not include it. I guess I could say... it was blown off.

DML provides you with solid (not open) guide horn individual track-links. These links are a bit of a pain to clean up, but look fine once they are finished.

This model of a command variant is packaged with decals for their German Grille kit. This means no command markings are provided. I found out from other modelers that a number of other DML Panthers come with Grille decals as well.

Panthers had a problem with the exhaust pipes emitting flames. This naturally drew unwanted

attention, so new flame suppression mufflers were fitted starting in October 1944. DML provides a pair with this kit.

As the German forces neared their own borders in 1944, the dark yellow of the three-tone camouflage was toned down. I painted mine this way with Tamiya paints. I did not use a camo pattern on the road wheels, as it was popular to paint them all green during this time period. A standard oil wash was used, along with mild weathering. Worn metal was modeled with Testors silver and pencil lead.

All in all, I would say this is a good build, a good value and a nice kit. As for this variant's use in action, well... maybe, maybe-not.

The Schwerer Plattformwagen Typ SSy.

DML/Dragon's kit of the Panther flatcar is very nice, the texture of the wood deck and detail of the bogie trucks is superb. The kit goes together very well and is a relatively quick build. The price is easy to take as well, I remember paying dearly for my old resin flatcar...

Included with this schwere plattformwagen is a decently detailed roadbed and track. I am not totally thrilled with this railroad stuff, but somehow I now have three German railroad pieces in my display case. They kind of grow on you.

Once these flat cars served their time reliably,

they were sometimes retired to work yard use. I have had people mention to me that they still can be seen rolling around German work yards.

This is one piece of iron that is hard to find info on, but then hey, it's just a heavy flatcar.

The Road Bed

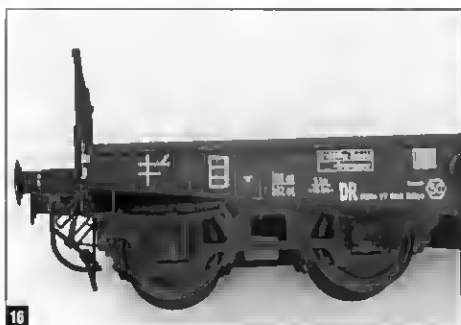
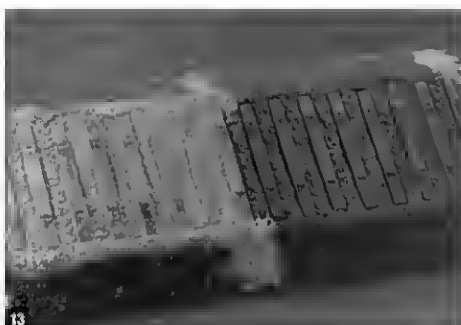
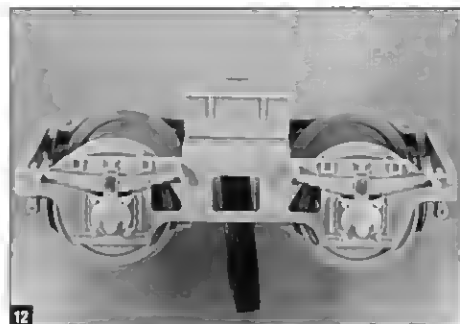
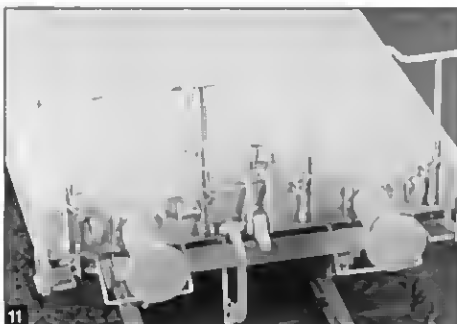
In order to get a good tight fit on the four pieces that make up the roadbed, I sanded the mating surfaces on a very flat surface, (my table saw).

I added extra bracing under the roadbed in order to help strengthen the whole structure. This was done with strips of styrene flat stock. I have seen modelers use a full sheet of styrene to completely span the under side of the roadbed. In hindsight, this would make a very strong assembly. Good idea! I narrowed the outer edge of the base with sandpaper, as it was uneven and kind of goofy looking.

Be very careful and assemble the railroad ties in the correct order, mine are correct, but were still a bit fumbly when I slid the rails into their mounts. I recommend that the whole thing be dry assembled and then liquid glued while in place.

There was a large gap along each side of the ties and I filled this in with Durham's water putty. I felt this gave it a more realistic appearance.

Next, I painted the roadbed Model Master Euro 1 Gray. The railroad ties were painted, Humbrol dark



10. The finished Panther. When the photo session was finished I fit regular rubber tire roadwheels to the kit to be more historically accurate. 11. The front end of the rail car. DML has done a bang-up job on this kit and the detail is first rate. 12. One of the two bogie trucks. Both these subassemblies are superbly designed and rendered—one of DML's best efforts. 13. I did a little bit of filling on the roadbed. Be careful to assemble the ties in the correct order. 14, 15. The finished front end of the car. Each end is identical. The bumpers were "worn" with a No. 2 pencil. 16. The markings set off the area quite well. I had a little trouble with some of the decals silvering. 17. The finished roadbed is a beauty. The rails were also given the No. 2 pencil treatment.

earth, no. 29 and the rails themselves, Humbrol track color, no. 173. A standard oil wash of burnt sienna mixed with flat black was applied to everything and finished with dry brushings of lightened base colors. The surface of the rails were painted Testors steel and once dried, polished with a no. 2 pencil. This polishing really gives the rails a nice effect. Various tones of light gray and Model Master Armor Sand were lightly dry-brushed across all surfaces of the roadbed. This was done to simulate dust and to give highlight.

The Railcar

The railcar assembles very well. The bogie trucks are a little fumbly but very nice when finished. Once they are assembled and fitted to the rails, I suggest you glue the wheels in position or you will be chasing this styrene beauty all over your workshop.

The platform assembles well, just make sure you're mating surfaces are flat and straight. I am sad to say there is no detail on the underside of the deck.

I mounted my brake shoes away from the wheels, but as I look back, I don't think they set this far away in a released position. I think if I did it again, I would have them in a braking position glued right to the wheels. After all it is parked.

I had a bit of trouble with the decals. They went on with the impression that they were smuggled down perfectly. They only needed Micro Sol with some Solvaset on the corner decals but, when they were dry, a few had silvered. I don't know if it was my fault or not. I really don't think it was, as I had a gloss underneath them that would make a Ferrari

modeler proud. I have heard a couple other modelers say they had trouble with these decals silvering, as well. But then again, some didn't...

I would suggest that the decals that go on each corner (these are the markings that signify what brake system is on the car) be hand painted, as they are too large for the area and do not fit properly.

I base coated this railcar with gloss black in order to get a gloss for the decals without having too much paint build up. The decals were applied next, followed by Dullcote and an oil wash. Floquil

grimy black was dry-brushed next, followed by Model Master Euro I Gray and Armor Sand. I added a bit of burnt sienna oil paint here and there to simulate rust, along with Testors silver on parts of wear.

That about sums it up for the railcar. A simple and sweet little model that is well detailed, easy to assemble and looks great carrying a sneaky Panzerbefehlswagen Panther Ausfuhrung G with gummigefederten stahllauffrollen.

—Barry "M29" Beaudry

MMIR RECCE

Shanghai Dragon PzbfWg Panther Ausf G (Steel Wheeled). Kit number 9046. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price \$19.98.

DML German Flatbed Railcar. Kit number 6069. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price \$28.98.

References

Germany's Panther Tank The quest for combat Supremacy by Thomas L. Jentz, Schiffer Publishing Ltd. Atglen, PA ISBN: 0-88740-812-5 This is one Panther book you don't want to miss. *Panther & Its Variants* by Walter J. Spielberger, Schiffer Publishing Ltd. Atglen, PA ISBN: 0-88740-397-2

Panther by Thomas Anderson & Vincent Wai, Concord Publications Co. New Territories, Hong Kong ISBN: 962-361-610-4 If you need an inexpensive single reference, consider this one.

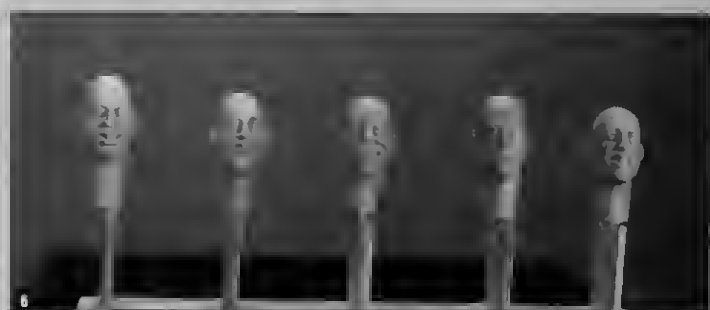
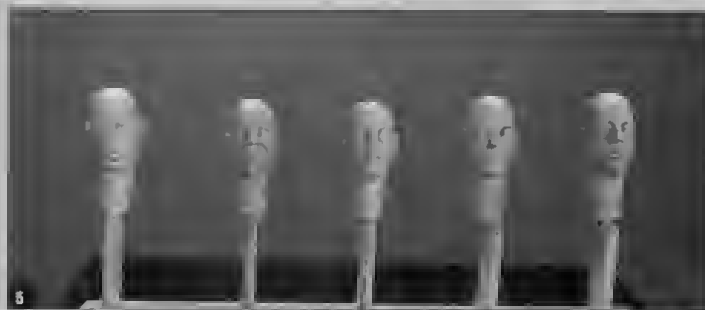
Panzer in Saumur No. 2, Publisher, Dai Nippon Kaiga Co. Ltd., Tokyo Japan ISBN: 4-499-20554-9 Contains photos of the A model, but has good info and drawings of the late G.

Panther in Action by Bruce Culver, Squadron/Signal Publications, Carrollton, Texas ISBN: 0-89747-044-3

Encyclopedia of German Tanks of World War Two by Peter Chamberlain and Hilary Doyle, Technical Editor Thomas L. Jentz, Arms and Armour Press Sterling Publishing Co. New York, New York ISBN: 1-85409-214-6.

Mini-Men

A Look at What's New on the Figure Front



Comrades in Arms

The latest round from the boys in Scotland is pure US World War II, with seven new releases. All of them are in fatigues for spring/summer/fall usage. Here we go.

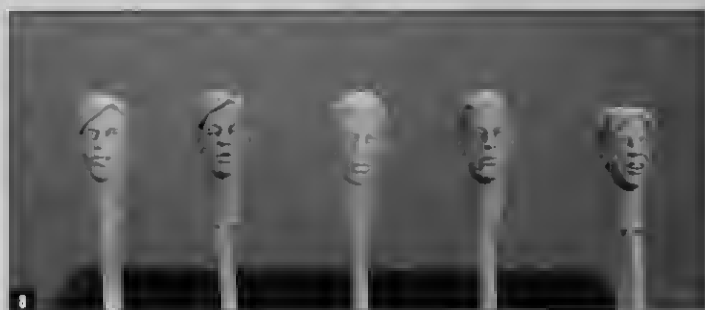
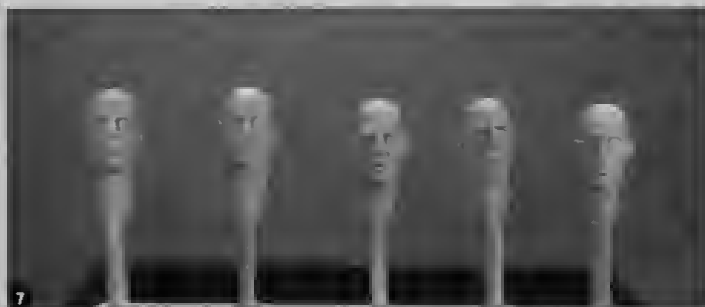
B33, US Officer with Binoculars (1), is a prone fellow with sleeves rolled, taking a look around. **B34 is a GI Sitting with Rifle (2)**, in a very casual pose and M1. **B35 is a GI Sitting with Thompson (3)**, another sit-down GI with machine gun for field use or plopped down inside a track. All in all, a welcome sub-series of multi-purpose grunts to dress up your latest.

Hornet

Roger Saunders, sole proprietor and head carver of Homet, continues to amaze and delight with another round of fantastic head sets. These five sets are all generic, for use anywhere, and can turn the most mundane figure into a masterpiece.

HH9, 5 different bare heads with sleeping or exhausted faces (4) (there's a mouthful) gives you cinco bald dudes to park around your AFVs, in the cab of a truck, etc. They might also be reading a map. Slap on headgear of choice, add hair, or leave 'em gleamin.' **HH10, 5 different female heads (without hair) (5)**, is a unique idea. Over half the

world's population is female, yet there aren't that many female 1/35 figures. So, this set will allow you to change the appearance of those that are available. Smack on a blob of putty, swirl it around, and there's your hair. **HH11, 5 different bare heads laughing, joking (6)** is another instant Homet classic, with some of the most incredible detailing you can possibly imagine—you know these guys. **HH12, 5 different bare heads neutral expressions (7)**, are more superb likenesses to fill any available collar. And **HH13, 5 different heads youthful faces with 1940's haircuts (8)**, is again Homet at its best, although these haircuts could be of any era.



Remember that these are youthful, not necessarily youths, and could be any guy between 12 and 30. Roger, you're simply the best.

Jaguar

Jaguar continues their barrage of "figures you gotta have and no one else is doing," with unbelievable detailing and variety.

First up are two single figures in Jaguar's bagged figure series. **63301, WWII Russian tank rider holding red flag (9)**, is a lot of Ivan for not much green. Hands are molded to a wooden post, which holds a brass rod (included), which supports

an impressive resin flag. **63303, WWII Russian tank rider standing on fender of T34 or SU100 (10)**, (whew!) has a very Slavic-looking fellow in padded telogreika and fur shapka, brandishing a PPSH 41. He could be standing just about anywhere.

63611, The Glorious Days 1941 (11), is Jaguar's third visit to the Reichstag, following **63603** (Beginning of a New End, with Russians on the roof) and **63604** (Ivan Was Here—Russians lootin'). This is one major-league Jag-O-Rama. A hefty base sports steps and a huge column taken directly from Reichstag photos, and there's Hitler and Goring tripping the light fantastic. The

likenesses are dead-on. This would expand into one spiffy vignette by adding an entourage, guards, staff car, etc.

63069, The Accordion Players Berlin, 1945 (12), is a nifty pair with two cheery Russians squeezing their way to fame and fortune. Check out the heavy guy. Both figures are single piece castings—just attach the heads.

63070, Wounded German Soldiers (13), is another fine pair of damaged goods from Jaguar. Both are sufficiently battered and bandaged, and the standing man even has a wound tag on his jacket.

63074, Street Fighters III, E. Prussia 1945



(14), isn't a video game but a pair of German types preparing to do the dash and smash. With mine and Panzerfaust, picture them waiting for Ivan's armor to come wheeling around the bend. Includes one of the best Jag-O-Rama bases yet, with ruined archway and plenty of rubble.

63075, The Volkssturm, Berlin 1945 (15), depicts two members of Hitler's final line of defense. They're semi-takin' it easy, wearing overcoats and with Panzerfausts in hand.

63076, Rise and Shine (16), is a must-have. Neat little Jag-O-Rama base with low wall and gate, as two Panzer types welcome the day. One washes

up over a small tub (which includes a clear resin insert for the water!) and the other enjoys a cup of Java and a plate of grub. Great stuff.

63077, Breakfast in Bed (17), is the obvious companion set to Rise and Shine. Here's a very convincing sleeping guy, with guy #2 in a sweater vest kneeling over a makeshift stove doing the sunny side up routine. There's more goodies here—a Russian helmet full of eggs, frying pan, plate of chow, and more. Now if we could just convince Jaguar to start releasing accessory sets with the little goodies such as these ... ! A simple base features depressions for Sleepy.

63078, Sitl (18), has a Luftwaffe officer in a large lawn-type chair. He's in full regalia, holding a smoke and a plate of chow, as Fido waits for a scrap. Includes a small pile of books and simple base. This guy would also look terrific in the back of a staff car—even if you don't build planes, remember that there were always fly-boys going to staff meetings with their tread head counterparts.

63081, Chargel (19), is a Florian Geyer SS NCO on his steed. There's about 18 pieces to this set, including choice of helmet or Feldmütze, and the horse is a marvel. Great fit, and the ears and mane are molded on.



63082, Have a Light (20), includes two cold-weather German tankers having a smoke. The kneeling man wears a fur cap, and bears the unique characteristic of having his Panzer tunic buttoned over. Very original, and a go-anywhere pair. Includes basic base.

63084, Which Way To The Front? (21), has already become an instant classic, as it features an SS driver and officer/passenger for Tamiya's Steyr 1500. Both wear camouflage smocks, and a resin map is molded into the officer's hands. Collect 'em all.

Warriors

Team Warriors is riding high lately with more cool Germans, plus more GIs than we've seen in the past.

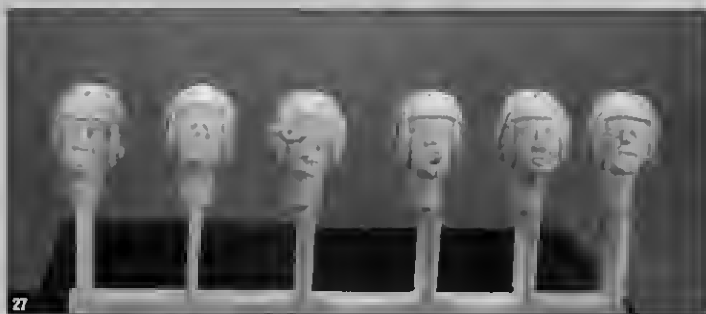
35225, US Infantry, France 1944 (22), depicts two hard-chargin', high-steppin' grunts blasting their way into the fatherland. Both carry combat packs, as one holds an M1 and the other squeezes off his Thompson. Nice ammo slings and bags on both guys. Highly animated and a welcome set.

35228, SS Winter Tiger Crew (23), features two full and two partial figures to dress up your winter Panzers. These are ultra cool, friends and neighbors, possibly the best German tank crew yet

from Warriors. All four are appropriately dressed in tank crew/winter suit combos. And if you gotta have more, the two standing dudes are also available separately. Fritz putting on his jacket is 35244, and Helmut buttoning his sleeve is 35236.

35229, US 29th Division Infantryman (24), might just be the dude on the Private Ryan poster. He's holding his Garand at the ready, and a turn of the head would put him in charge of some prisoners. We really like those hands molded to the M1.

35230, US General, Europe 1943-45 (25), is an interesting choice, because how many US general officer figures can you name other than those in Tamiya's Famous Generals? Holding



binoculars, he wears fur-trimmed tanker's jacket and sports two stars on his helmet. If you want, you could shave these off and change his rank. He definitely has a Patton-esque quality, though leaner and lesser-starred.

35231, US Sniper, France 1944 (26), is another Private Ryan-inspired figure with Joe kneeling in a ruined doorway and peering down his M1903 with Weaver sight. A well-balanced and well-executed soldier, and we like the base, too. Who wants to be the first to scratch build that big ol' French building with Fritz in the attic?

Yanks

9712, US Tanker Heads Set #2 (27), gives you six GIs in the 1941 pattern tanker's helmet, all with varying expressions and even a couple with stogies added. You can never have too many good guys.

9725, US Medic/MP (28), is one of the best yet from Yanks. He's one piece, plus the head, wearing bib overalls and overshoes. The armband gives him his Medic/MP status, but could be removed without too much pain to make him a tanker or regular Joe. Good effort.

9708, US M3 75mm Gun Crew (29), is a three-GI set for KMC's 75mm gun conversion,

which is for Tamiya's M3 half-track (got all that?). These are some worn-down dudes, with a very realistic look. Shirts open and untucked, and one in a T-shirt. If you don't have the KMC/Tamiya combo, they still work for other US WWII AFVs. Well done.

It bears mentioning that all figures reviewed in Mini-Men are provided by the respective manufacturers, and are unsolicited. We are happy to review any and all appropriate 1/35 figures forwarded to us.

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